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PAUL THOMAS

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ATM WORLDWIDE
THE DRUM & BASS AND UNDERGROUND MUSIC CULTURE PAGES

EDITOR'S NOTE

In this issue of ATM we're supporting the cause of the independents, through our 10 Of The Best...Record Shops, you can check it out on pages 24-25. A few years ago, I worked in a record shop, and it was a job that gave me great pleasure at times. The day-to-day banter with regular customers," Shut it knobhead!", the opportunity to get my mitts on original and rare vinyl (we traded in second hand stuff too), the base for promoting my club night and the fact that you were literally in the shop window for promoters to book you was buzzing! The record shop day job is one that has saved many a DJ from having to sell their soul and get an office job.

On the downside, the pay was crap, some of the regulars had disgusting aversions to soap, random madmen would come in and do freaky things like shout at the wall and sniff poppers at 10am, and after DJing or partying regularly until the early hours, the compulsory Saturday shifts became something of a bind. Writing this in a haze of nostalgia, though, my memories of the time are generally good ones, and the unique counter culture that can be found in independent record shops is something that should be preserved.

This can only happen if people don't take their local shops for granted and actually put their hands in their pockets now and again to support them. If we were to lose more of the independent record shops, it'd be like losing a vital organ, so next time you're in town, show some love to these shops or when you pass by in the future they might not be there at all.

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FEATURES

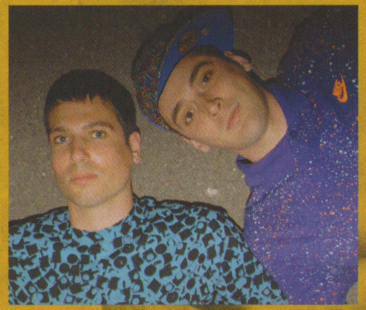
12. COVER CD: DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH
16. DIE & CLIPZ
23. LYNX
27. KRAFTY KUTS
28. NU TONE
31. GURU
37. WILEY
38. EZ ROLLERS
42. COVER STORY: COMMIX
46. SLAMMIN VINYL
49. NOOKIE

REGULARS

06. WORD ON THE STREETS
11. GUEST COLUMN: ROBYN CHAOS
15. D&B HALL OF FAME: RANDALL
20. WORKING CLASS HEROES
24. 10 OF THE BEST... UK RECORD SHOPS
32. THREADS
50. LEADERS OF THE NU SKOOL
54. TECH SUPPORT WITH NOOKIE
56. IN THE LAB: MATRIX & FUTUREBOUND
59. ONLINE CULTURE: CONTENT ON DEMAND
76. CITY SCENE: PERTH
77. WORLD SCENE: THAILAND
78. CLUBZONE
81. WHO SHOT YA?
82. SUBSCRIPTIONS & NEXT ISSUE PREVIEW

REVIEWS

60. ALL STAR REVIEWS & CHARTS
62. DRUM & BASS REVIEWS
67. HIP HOP REVIEWS
69. BREAKBEAT REVIEWS
70. HARDCORE REVIEWS
71. DUBSTEP REVIEWS
72. ALBUM REVIEWS
75. GAME REVIEWS



Contact: alex@atm-mag.com

SOUTH WEST FOUR FESTIVAL COMPETITION!

We've got 5 pairs of tickets worth £70 a pair to be won for the South West Four Festival, taking place in Cardiff, Wales, on Sunday 26th August. This is taking place as part of the Metro Weekender, the Drum and Bass line up in Cardiff features LTJ Bukem, Andy C, Goldie, Fabio, Grooverider and local boy done good, High Contrast! Check out the full line-up here: www.southwestfour.com/cardiff/

To enter simply tell us which of the big names on the Drum & Bass bill hails from Wales?
A: Goldie
B: Grooverider
C: High Contrast

Send the answer to **comp@atm-mag.com** with 'South West Four' in the subject line. Winners will be notified on close of comp (6th August) Good luck!

DARKESTRAL RECORDINGS

The mysterious forces behind Darkestral Recordings have been hard at work with the launch of their new imprint. Sounding different to everything else in 2007, Darkestral is best described as a cinematic exploration of deep-end drum and bass noir. Reminding us of the glory days of Photek, this label is without doubt one of the most exciting labels to launch in recent times. Let's hear from the people behind it:

"Darkestral has been set up to explore drum & bass at a strictly 170 BPM tempo, consciously decided on, in order to bring some space and freedom to the construction of the music. Each release will be carefully chosen for its open-minded attitude, quality and timelessness, as this is the philosophy of the label. By giving the artists the freedom to approach the music from any angle we believe the results will be pure and will appeal to the headz. Initial reactions appear to be bearing this out as Marcus Intalex, Doc Scott, Goldie, Storm, Breakage, Bailey, Fabio, Grooverider, Flight, London Elektricity, DJ Hype, Commix, A.I., DJ Lee, Klute and Teebee have all supported the debut release 'Comanche' / 'The Chamber'. Producers Instra:mental - who people may recognise from their previous music on Source Direct's label – have dropped 'Comanche' and it has been smashing the more leftfield sets. 'The Chamber' is collaboration with Mr Darkestra himself for a journey into pure cinematic soundscape territory.

Darkestral 001 is available as a limited 500 copies only silver vinyl. Darkestral 002 features Instra:mental's emotional 'Sakura' coupled with 'Pacific Heights' and is due in September, closely followed by a Jonny L vs. Instra:mental vs. Drkstr single. For further info, or to listen to tracks head to: www.myspace.com/darkestralrecordings. Alternatively, if you have anything you wish us to hear: AIM: ricodrkstr… if you can catch us."

MUZIK HERTZ RECORDIGS

This brand new label straight outta Birmingham kicks off with jump-up frenzy from Essex producer DJ Complex with the tracks 'Decisions' and 'Zero'. It's had massive support from Hazard, Cabbie, Kenny Ken, Majistrate, Ruffstuff, and Nicky Blackmarket. For the future they have beats from label boss Escape, plus DJ Rusty (Brazil), Darke and Canada's Capitol J. Watch out for forthcoming tour night across the UK, Germany, Belgium and France. www.myspace.com/muzikhertz.

ALL NU DIRECTIONS

The Nu Directions camp are set for the summer with a bustling release schedule. Out now is 'Nu Romantics' / 'What She Wants' from electronic d'n'b outfit, Baby Origami. Also out now from Canadian duo, The Fix, is 'What Can I Do?' / 'Brooklyn'. The future for Nu Directions includes the single, 'Nice As Me' / 'Strangers' from Mutt and a mix CD from The Insiders, 'Infinite In All Directions'. The mix features exclusive tracks from The Insiders, Random Movement, Mathematics and Specific and these tracks will be released on a double vinyl pack. For audio check www.myspace.com/nudirections. The word from the label is that future releases include material from Random Movement, Spectrasoul, Kubiks and Chris Inperspective. On the events front, the monthly free d'n'b night, Nu Motion, now opens at the earlier time of 6pm. Hosted at the 1001 Cafe on Brick Lane, London, this session features different artists from the Nu Directions crew at each party. For info check the Nu website: www.whatsyourdirection.com.

METALHEADZ

Metalheadz have the second half of the year lined up. Firstly the massive 'Be True' / 'Satellite Type 2' from Commix will be dropping in July with their debut album ready for September. Expect a remix EP featuring Claude Von Stroke, Underground Resistance and some other big names from outside the d'n'b scene to drop in October. On top of this the following 12's are also coming out. 'Headz Up' / 'Combination Style' from Break and 'Extacy' / 'Untitled' from D Kay & Lee. The most distant release (Meth 78) will feature two tracks from Seba. Lastly, look out for a Metalheadz repress series featuring 12 classic Metalheadz tracks from Dillinja, J Majik, Doc Scott, Adam F, Alex Reece & more. Expect them to hit the shops in July!

CRAZY NEW SOUND

The craziest new label in town, Padded Room Recordings, is releasing Anima of Kingston's latest track, 'Bre4k Me'. Complete with a unique a style the label is dedicated to the more deep and dark side of D&B. Anima has packed emotion, tension and originality into Padded Room's first release, which they hope will be the first of many. Check this tune out @ www.junodownload.com or www.beatsdigital.com.

JUNCTION 11 RECORDS

Junction 11 records was set up by Lewis Sinclair aka Subverse along with help from his compadre, Donovan 'BadBoy' Smith. Both of them were born and raised in Gloucester, which is where the name of the label comes from (Junction 11 of the M5). The label is dedicated to putting out dance floor drum & bass of the finest calibre. The first release was a double A-side ripper from Malfoy. 'Street Fight / Labyrinth' it sold out within days and both tunes have proved themselves on the floor with support from the likes of TC, Die, Hype, Ash Attack & Heist to name but a few. The second release is due out on white label in July, Junction 11 have two tracks from none other than System Shock Recordings head honcho, Callide. The tracks are 'City of Angels' and 'No Sound Test'. Both tracks have been getting worked over on the circuit. Pure dance floor action! The J11 team have just launched their brand new website at www.junction11records.co.uk.

BACHELORS OF SCIENCE

The San Francisco based duo Bachelors Of Science follow the success of 2006's 'Jah No Dead' and 'Wicked Ways' with two singles from their upcoming Horizons Music solo LP 'Science Fiction'. The first single sees them collaborating with Bingo and French liquid favourite Redeyes for the sublime 'Hold On', while the flip teams them up with label mates Saburuko - fresh from the recent success of 'Warped' - for the disco tinged 'Dreams Come True'. The second single, 'Anytime She Goes Away' and 'Spanish Sun' gives us another slice of the Bachelors' 'breakbeat soul' style that they're so well known for, with support from Sabre, Alix Perez, Redeyes, DJ Lee, Bungle and more.

Both singles are in stores now at http://www.horizonsmusic.co.uk with a bonus music video for the second single available on the band's myspace: www.myspace.com/bachelorsofscience. The group will also be embarking on a limited series of dates in support of their album, stopping off at Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and more. Fore more information visit www.bachelorsofscience.com

TRAINERSPOTTER: WIN FRESH THREADS!

Two English lads with a love of sports heritage and sportswear set out to create a brand that represented their passion. They launched Trainerspotter in 2002 with no outside participation and no compromises. Eventually they were joined by a third like-minded member and the brand began to expand its parameters and grew to worldwide proportions. Because of the synchronicity of the three designers, a unique mindset now directs the aesthetic of the brand, drawing inspirations from sports culture, music, film and fashion. Breaking through any kind of calculation, Trainerspotter has found a hard won freedom that has both integrity and coherence.

Stocked worldwide in the most directional stores found in each city, Trainerspotter is rapidly evolving but continually seeking to offer more detailed garments, telling more inspirational stories but never compromising the brand ethos: 'To give anything less than best is to sacrifice the gift.' www.trainerspotter.com

We've got 3 t-shirts to giveaway. For your chance to win one, courtesy of Trainerspotter, answer the easy-peasy question below.

When was Trainerspotter launched?
A: 1902
B: 2002
C: 1992

Send the answer to **comp@atm-mag.com** with 'Trainerspotter' in the subject line. Winners will be notified on close of comp. You've got to be in it to win it!

SPEARHEAD RECORDS

Spearhead Records 11th release (Lomax's 'Brain Freeze EP') was released in June and was the label's biggest release so far. As if the 4 monster tunes weren't enough on their own, they come packed in the artwork stylings of Fact's Of Life designs. Floating about on promo any day now will be SPEAR012, which is 'Fascinated' and 'Formatted' by the mighty L.A.O.S, who were also responsible the massive 'Panda Style' on WOMC3. Following this will be 'Peace Of Mind' / 'Reach Out' by the fantastic Atlantic Connection. If that's not enough to keep you entertained for the summer months, Spearhead's Future Retro Project will be dropping Lenzman's 'Close To Me' / 'I Want You' (RETRO003). Finally Lomax & Xample are working on the first Spearhead Remix 12". Lookout for their remixes doing the rounds on dub soon. www.dnbradio.net

YARUS RECORDS

'Sunshine' is the summer tune from Yarus. This high energy track combines Brazilian backing vocals and samba flavours with additional vocals from DJ Yoz and MC Tymich. Also on the vinyl is the super smooth 'Just Think!' The next piece out will be 'Mala Racha' / 'Sabrosona' by Dr Harvey feat. Petrona Martinez. These tunes promise to mix traditional Columbian music with powerful beats from Yarus. These are also available at www.djyarus.info.

EPOC LIVE

Raw d'n'b duo Epoc Live will be hitting Europe for the first time this summer. They are booked to play Germany, France, Poland, Luxembourg, Holland and many of the Greek Party Islands! For more info on these dates and a video of Epoc Live performing 'Unwind' visit www.myspace.com/epoclive. There is also a new mix CD/download recorded live at Shinobi D&B in Hull available from the website www.epoclive.co.uk.

FIZX-RECORDINGS

FizX Recordings has 18 artists around the globe including the UK, Netherlands, South America and Canada. This label, dedicated to serious upfront d'n'b, was established this year but has already grown considerably. Some of the artists who'll be releasing in the future are: 1nce Prodigal and Noize Komplaint from Canada, BrainWash from the UK, E.F.O. reppin' the Netherlands, The Unreal Project from South America and the curiously named Alien Pimp.

ANTIWORLD 070707

070707 is the date in the calendar for Antiworld. Tickets are selling fast and it's becoming the talk of the festival circuit. It's making its debut as a festival and is set in the beautiful heart of Hampshire at the Rushmoor Arena. It's set to accommodate 15,000 party people from all over the UK for 3 days and nights, featuring some of the world's best live acts and DJs across most of the electronic musical spectrum. For those not wishing to camp there's also the Potters International Hotel in walking distance to the festival site. Artists include Adam Beyer, Adam Lab4, Andy Farley, Ben Sims, British Murder Boys, Chris Liberator,

WANT RESPECT?

King Apparel, one of the UK's premier streetwear brands dedicated to youth culture, has collaborated with the 'Want Respect? Use a Condom', campaign to create 1,000 limited edition jeans featuring a unique condom stash pocket. This exclusive run, tagged with the 'Want Respect?' logo, are on sale in independent retailers throughout the UK. The condom pocket is neatly branded with the logo designed by international graffiti legend Mode 2. Leaving nothing to chance, every pair will come with a bespoke swing tag carrying 3 Trojan condoms, the Number 1 brand in America. There's also a promotional offer to buy Trojan condoms online and get one pack free.

King clothing is proudly worn by their programme of King Affiliates whose roster includes Sway, Plan B, Pyrelli and Y-B-M amongst other home-grown UK talents. King's strict 'no re-runs and no repeats' policy renders these limited edition jeans a socially conscious and fashionable necessity.

The King Apparel jeans are on sale in over 80 independent stockists throughout the UK, Ireland and also online (check the stockists section on www.king-apparel.com) priced at £75.00

SHOGUN STEP UPS

Shogun Audio have a string of releases on the horizon, as well as a monthly night and an upcoming tour. Debuts don't come much bigger than the recent 'Down the Line' by Alix Perez. Featuring the vocal talent of MC Fats, this tune has been receiving amazing response across clubland and on UK radio. The huge 'Back To Your Roots' remix by Friction + K-Tee, saw its full release on Monday 18th June, with DJ support from almost every major player within the scene, this has slowly fused itself into a modern day anthem.

Next up is a two-track glimpse into the diverse world of one of the Drum & Bass scenes true soldiers. Spirit's 'Mind to Mind' delivers his trademark sound with chunky drums and devastating bass. Forthcoming Shogun Audio tracks include the mighty 'Let it Happen' & 'Chaos Theory' by Break, and the Marcus Intalex Remix of the Commix classic, 'Faceless'. Meanwhile, SGN: LTD keeps growing from strength to strength, with a back-cat of artists including Survival, Alix Perez, Sabre & The Funktastics, slowly proving its aim to branch out and deliver cutting edge Drum & Bass from some of the hottest new talent within the scene.

With full to capacity events happening monthly at Audio in Brighton, and the prestigious End Club in London, Shogun have firmly stamped its mark on the club-scene. The next installment takes place on Friday 6th July @ Audio in Brighton. The event will feature a 2 hour set from none other than DJ Zinc and appearances from the Shogun camp include Alix Perez & SpectraSoul, with SP:MC hosting the show. Also, watch out for the 'Bank Holiday Special' Event, taking place on Friday 24th August @ The End.

HERBAL REMEDY

It seems that every week a new drum and bass event is added to Herbal nightclubs blossoming schedule. With regular events from the likes of Metalheadz, Hospital, Therapy Sessions, plus Grooverider's Sunday night weekly Grace, and the all-female event Feline, Herbal is without doubt one of the capital's most important clubs when it comes to supporting Drum & Bass.

With a brand new roof terrace area open - just in time for the smoking ban to come into play - Herbal are well positioned to offer smokers an outdoor space, which will be a big bonus for those who like a smoke on a night out and the space has also been used for BBQ's over the summer months. Not just content to be a purveyor of all things D&B, Herbal also showcases regular events from Soul 2 Soul legend Jazzie B, soulful house vanguards Bobby & Steve, as well as guest spots from all manner of top-class hip-hop, house and breakbeat artists. For more information head down to Herbal: www.herbaluk.com

Christopher Lawrence, Damian Lazarus, Daniel Anthony, Digitalism, Drumattic Twins, Evil 9, Felix Da Housecat, Fergie, Freestylers, Josh Wink, Kentaro, Layo & Bushwacka, Nicky Blackmarket, The Herbaliser and more. Tickets £100 advance from www.antiworld777.com.

HOSPITALITY AT HEAVEN

The third Hospitality event of 2007 at Heaven will be Friday September 14th. Featuring the biggest line ups and the nicest crowd around early bird tickets are available at the reduced rate of £12+BF from Ticketweb.co.uk / 08700 600 100 or check out www.hospitalrecords.com.

TOTAL SCIENCE

This month sees the release of the first in a series of mix CDs celebrating 10 years of Total Science's CIA imprint. The album will feature all your favourites and some tasty exclusives. Also on the decade tip the boys are set to release a collection of remixes on CIALTD, of classic tracks from the label and sister labels. First up is Break's mix of 'Breakfast Club' by Total Science and their own rework of Beta 2 & Zero T's 'Secada'. The next instalment on Q Project's Machine Funk imprint will be the massive 'Faith in Kaos' and 'Sex in the City'.

ONLINE DNB DOWNLOADS

dnb-sets.de is a search engine like Google or Yahoo which looks through the worlds biggest drum'n'bass forums for independent DJ-sets and mixes. The crawler checks boards like Dogs on Acid, D&B Arena, Future Forum, DnBForum.com, DnBarena.ru, Place4Bass, JungleScene, Toronto Jungle, LondonDnB and many more. If you're looking for a specific set, you can use the ingenious search option. Using the RSS feeds you're always up to date with the latest sets. Very nifty and useful for DJs and listeners alike: www.dnb-sets.de.

TRACKITDOWN

Europe's leading download store is now making sample packs available for download from the world's biggest dance music producers and leading sample CD companies. Bedroom producers are all too aware of that horrible feeling of not having enough quality samples to make music with. Constantly scouring web forums and websites is a laborious task, so why can't there be one place available to get the best samples? Now, there is. As well as exciting product from leading sample CD manufacturers Zero G, Loopmasters and Equinox Sounds, Trackitdown has contacted some of the world's leading producers and dance labels who are making exclusive sample packs available for download. Available now are sample packs from: Phynn, Davide Carbone, BK, Alexander Koning, Si Begg, Nick Sentience and Clive King. www.trackitdown.net/genre/sample_packs/featured_tracks.html

DJ HOBZEE

Currently out on Crisis, Hobzee, has 'Passin' My Bye' / 'Cubism' and on Progress LTD 'Requiem' / 'The Pressure'. Forthcoming is 'Revolutions' and in collaboration with Zyon Base on Celsius Recordings is 'Blue Lotus'. Watch out for more from Hobzee on all the aforementioned labels as well as Future Thinking and the Horizons Music group. Also expect plenty more collabs with Saburuko, Zyon Base, Eveson, Notion and Tendai.

LAST.FM BBQ @ HERBAL'S ROOFTOP TERRACE

On Thurs 12th July & 16th August, 6pm – 11pm social music website Last.FM are taking over the roof terrace at Herbal. Since its inception Last.FM's irregular rooftop BBQs have taken place at their HQ in Old Street and have been an opportunity for staff and friends to get together, bask in the glorious sunshine and eat, drink and generally be merry. Unfortunately Hackney Council and the Noise Police have deemed this activity illegal (boo!) so Last.FM have risen to the challenge of providing a friendly environment for their employees, friends and the stations users to keep the BBQ vibe alive. Music is provided by the Last.FM DJ team.

DEEP SOUL MUSIC

Conceived in the summer of 2006 by friends Subverse and Stumasta, Deep Soul Music is a continuation for Sub & Stu after a stint spent managing Sensor Records for the mighty Donovan 'Bad Boy' Smith.

The next release is DSM002 with 'True' by Coalition and 'Omnipresence' from Subsurface. After the success of Do The Math's 'Ain't No Home' and the steppy minimalism of LSB's '11th Groove' the promos of DSM002 were released in June and quickly sold out, the full release for DSM001 has been scheduled for July 9th 2007 and DSM002 will be out in August. Future projects on the Deep Soul imprint will come from Lynx, SpectraSoul and Zyon Base.

In other DSM news, the crew have started a monthly night at Bohemia, Cheltenham. The launch night which also doubled as Donovan 'Bad Boy' Smith's birthday bash on June 14th, saw Shogun Audio's Alix Perez spinning his grooves there, alongside DSM artist and Cardiff Maestro Specific. From August onwards the night will be running every 3rd Thursday and will feature artists signed to the DSM roster such as, LSB & SpectraSoul as well as new faces like Oxford's DJ FU. Every night will be backed up with DSM residents, Donovan Smith, Subverse, Subsurface, Ben-E & Stumasta.

As well as releasing a podcast via Intense Records, DSM have also continued with The Deep Soul Show on Gloucester FM (96.6FM). Tune in every Friday 11pm-1am to hear Subverse host guests like Bryan Gee, Donovan Smith, Dan Marshall and Kubiks. If you're not lucky enough to live in the Gloucestershire region you can log onto www.gloucesterfm.com

BEST OF BRITISH IS BACK

Saturday 11th August is the date to remember as one of the UK's most popular large-scale raves returns, The Best of British. Well known for offering the complete rave experience this event sees BOB return to the legendary Bagley's venue, now known as Cavas. Billed as 'The Resurrection' this event features 4 rooms with the best Drum & Bass, Jungle, Breaks, Old Skool, Hardcore and Dubstep artists around today all in attendance.

In Arena 1 representing upfront d'n'b will be G Dub, Hazard, Fabio, Grooverider, Krust, Lemon D, Nicky B, Ray Keith, Total Science, Bryan G, Brockie, Benny Page, Randall, Darren J and R Type. MCs include IC3, Eksman, Shabba, Navi, Fearless, the Ragga Twins, Fats, Moose, Rizla, Flyte and Fleximus. Over in the old skool hardcore and jungle arena: The Ratpack, Phantasy, Devious D, Nookie, Funky Flirt and more.

Reppin MK Hardcore are Brisk, Dougal, Seduction, Kevin Energy, Slipmat, Billy Bunter, DJ Vibes and Spinback with MCs Storm, Whizzkid, Casper and Charlie B. The dubstep lineup in the newly renovated smokers garden features Mala, Youngsta, Benga, D1, Alex Deadman, Rogue State and Hoodsey with Task and Marksman on hosting duties.

2ND ALBUM FROM BLU MAR TEN

Blu Mar Ten is a London-based, widely acclaimed musical outfit made up of Leo Wyndham, Chris Marigold and Michael Tognarelli. Well-established within the Drum & Bass scene via Hospital Records, Doc Scott's 31 Records and LTJ Bukem's Good Looking Records, Blu Mar Ten is synonymous with the classic atmospheric D'n'B sounds of the mid-late nineties. Over the years the band have also been releasing an eclectic wave of house, downtempo, cinematic and vocal tracks on labels such as Naked Music, Guidance Recordings, Sven Van Hees' Your Lips and of course Exceptional.

'Black Water' is the trio's 2nd album for Exceptional, taking over where their debut full length album 'The Six Million Names of God' left off. Presenting a wide range of sounds and influences, 'Black Water' is a varied and interesting listen. From the lush cosmic cinematic sounds of 'Black Water', 'Rouge' and 'Dolce Vita' to the more immediate breakbeat tinged songs such as 'Anytime Soon' and 'Why Me, Why Now' the album swirls and turns like a musical journey over the continents. 'Black Water' is released out on Exceptional Records, July 9th www.exceptional-records.co.uk

CIA NEWS

Bungles second CIA single 'Just A Little Bit Closer' feat Darrison, taken from his debut LP 'Down to Earth' is out now. On Advanced there's Makoto & Specialist 'Packinco' / A Different Story'. DeepKut has a new 12 from Concept and Shnek, 'Open Up' feat Cycle / 'True Thoughts', this will be followed by DJ Vapour's 'Here comes the Rain' / 'ManFlu' feat Jem One. Look out for the G Dub remix of Bungles 'Resized' ft Laura Pacheco dropping after summer.

TECHNIQUE RECORDINGS NEWS

New Technique signing Terravita are ready to drop their debut release 'Quantum Physics' / 'Damages'. The trio from Boston, USA, have produced a number of other tracks which are causing damage on dance floors across the globe, so keep your ears to the ground for the sound of Terravita. Also forthcoming is Drumsound & Bassline Smith's 'Stay Loose (Tear Drop)' / 'Tijuana', due out late summer. Drumsound & Bassline Smith's highly anticipated anthem 'Cold Turkey' is out now as well as the massive 'Skumbag RIP' & Phetsta's excellent 'The Congo' EP. For more information on forthcoming releases and exclusive MP3 downloads go to www.techniquerecordings.co.uk or www.myspace.com/techniquerecordings.

RAM REPRESS

As part of the Ram Records 15th Year Anniversary celebrations, they are making available 10 classic singles as limited edition clear vinyl pressings in plastic sleeves that allows an inlay, featuring a specially designed Ram 15 logo to show through. On the reverse will be a cut away section of the Ram 15 artwork / logo that when pieced together with the relevant other inlays will make up a 3ft square poster. The release date for the whole lot is 2nd July. There's too many classics to mention them all but all the anthems are there including 'Roll On', 'Nightflight', 'Valley of the Shadows', 'Truly One' and 'Turbulence'. Now all we need is a 'Sound Control' repress to replace our missing copy!

UNIQUE 3 RE-RELEASE 'THE THEME'

The man responsible for pioneering UK breakbeat and inspiring a whole host of producers including a lot of the first wave of drum and bass producers, is re-releasing his classic, 'The Theme' on Fat! Records.

RUFIGE

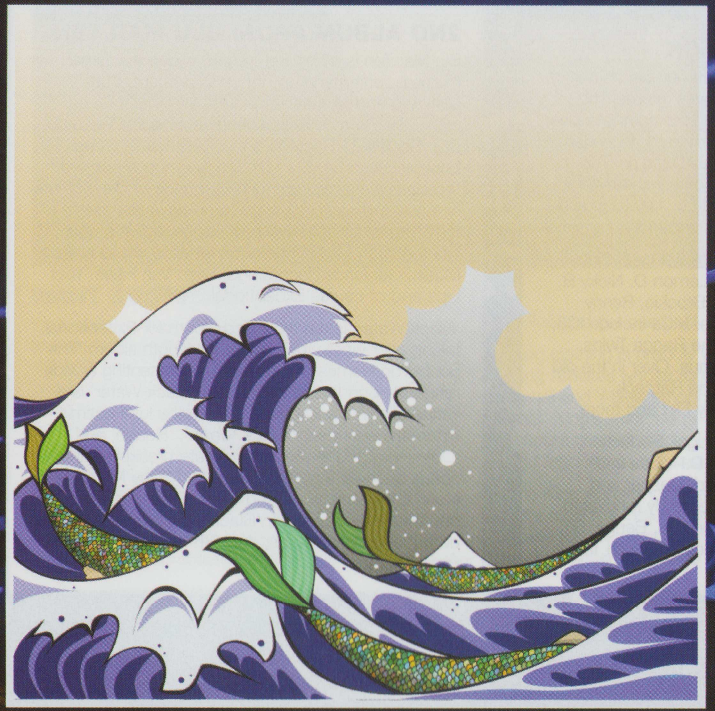
After the first storming release featuring Vapour, Skitty, Outrage & Jamal, expect the releases to come thick and fast from the Ruffige camp. Next up comes an EP from Mutt, Wooz (Sigma), SPY & Fission with future EPs from Kiat & Ash, Gem 1 & Skitty.

RAZORS EDGE

The Razors Edge remix label has been quiet for too many years now and has now relaunched with the massive 'Monkey Boy' remixes from Doc Scott & Generation Dub. Following up this release will be a 12" featuring the modern day classic, 'Wax'd' remixed by D Kay & Marky.

NHS122LP/CD/DD: **OUT NOW!**
NU:TONE
BACK OF BEYOND
"SUPERBLY BLENDING SOULFUL VIBES, OLDSKOOL FLAVOURS AND A PHAT DOSE OF DANCEFLOOR DUB"
★★★★ IDJ MAGAZINE

NHS123: **HIGH CONTRAST**
IF WE EVER b/w PINK FLAMINGOS
OUT 16 JULY
"FUSES THE ENERGY OF EARLY HARDCORE WITH THE CRISP PRODUCTION EXPECTED IN THIS SHINING FUTURE OF D&B STUDIO BOFFINRY"
- D.O.A. RECORD OF THE WEEK



NHS123: **MUFFLER**
MERMAIDS
b/w WAVES BREAKING
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LIMITED EARLY BIRD TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
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HOSPITALRECORDS.COM

guest column

pic: Dylan

Up Close & Personal with ROBYN CHAOS

Gutentag fellow soldiers! Robyn Chaos, or you can call me Professor Chaos here, DJ, Producer, Faith in Chaos vocalist, Therapy Sessions Head Honcho, Anger Management Agent Extraordinaire, Domestic Goddess of husband Dylan, Worldwide party gurl and bad Jack Daniels drinker (I have actually had to break up with him this week, you know how it goes. It was a toxic relationship for too long, LOL).

I'm touching down to wax lyrical while based in Berlin on a mini European tour. Most events I play at, especially our very own Worldwide Therapy Sessions, are really like returning to a warm, though perhaps dysfunctional (come on, lets tell it like it is) family almost every weekend. From London, to Vienna, Berlin to St Petersburg, Moscow to Brussels, Porto to Los Angeles, Olten, San Francisco, Philly, North Carolina, over to Christchurch, Perth and Melbourne. I think that in almost every major city in the world I have a colleague (or five or ten), who I also consider my friends, bringing me or my crew out, not only to play, but lovingly into their fold.

Each city I get to, I have the most amazing time, spoiled absolutely rotten by the loveliest people, to whom I am forever grateful, not just for their kindness, but genuine realness, companionship, conversation and views. I learn languages and history, I'm taken anywhere from African Reserves to Vineyards, Gothic Cathedrals to Marie Antoinette's birth palace and royal gardens, hornets nests in the mountains of New Zealand, to nine hour Midnight Express-style train journeys through the depths of Russia in 20o below. I am a highly sensitive person to my environment. The excitement I get from seeing, hearing, tasting, drinking (of course, ha-ha), attempting to communicate by any means necessary, and immersing myself in new cultures, stops me from going insane, or, at very least, keeps it slightly contained. I'm sure Dylan can vouch for that!

As I'm sure you've all been waiting on pins and needles for me to spill the friggin' beans, like the Simpsons episode where Homer tells all Marge's secrets (pssst Dylan uses Feria Midnight Black hair dye, he annihilates the bathroom and every beautiful crisp white cotton - 600 count - pillowcase I have ever bought), the downside of a two DJ couple household is that it can be hard when it comes to domestic routine and doesn't always give us time to concentrate on our relationship, which really is hard, especially as it's important to lay certain foundations or simply give each other time and attention. And I realise that marriage doesn't come with a manual, but most people aren't gallivanting around the world DJing all the time and can put the proper time into it. Dylan and I try, but it can be hard when we're always working, always being a work team, and I don't think we have ever, eeeever had a non-working holiday in the eight years we've been together. I even worked on bookings on our honeymoon, tracking down internet cafes in Miami during the conference (which says it all, our honeymoon was teamed with WMC - I know, I know, we're workaholics).

But then I guess if we were "normal" (and what is normal?), we'd have something else to bitch about. In this world there really is no set way of doing anything. Remember that and don't let people tell you how to run things or be happy. You listen to some people and find out down the line that they're some lunatic sewing people's limbs into MC Hammer-style French Balloon Baggies, or "sex people" or something even weirder or just as fucked or perverse as you; they were just quieter about it. I've discovered there are some serious freaks out there, I guess we would be the ones to know, ha-ha!

So, we are always on the go, and the sheer amount of stimulation means sometimes, though I love to come home, and D does too, we both get some seriously itchy feet after about a month - who am I kidding? Perhaps two weeks. Luckily for us, we're not home long enough for it to be an issue, but lets put it this way, we moved to the US in August of last year and we have a room that we just dumped boxes in and closed the door - like the wardrobe to Narnia - and we act like it just simply isn't there. Cooking has totally gone out the window of late (and I make a great Roast, Thai, Moroccan tagine and "mookies" – a cross between cookies and muffins). Any sense of routine, like seeing friends and family, is dealt with by either military precision or we just get stoned and become recluses (hopefully not anymore as I'm trying to give that up too, which may be too much alongside the Jack Daniels, but as long as I don't have to give up shoes!)

The amount of work Dylan and I do, day in, day out, can be overwhelming mentally, as we are pretty much the sole team day-to-day, from midday to 5am, tapping away on our computers, with Joy Division playing in the background. It can sometimes rob you – it would probably rob anyone - of their creativity. Landing in another city, another country, another continent, with all the promises of adventure, the unfamiliar, the unknown, new faces and new cultures and all that it entails, is the most inspirational thing I can think of. I turn into a five-year-old and my energy is renewed, and every train sound, every child's laugh or siren in the street, every patter of feet on the sidewalk, or sound or smell of the ocean or of the forest, quite quickly starts to fill that void in my brain; the library of ideas, that day-to-day business deplete. It renews your youthfulness, positivity, ambition, and puts the hugest smile on my face; it's like a Robyn Renaissance! This World is our's!

www.myspace.com/robynchaos
www.angeruk.net
www.myspace.com/dylanuk
www.freak-recordings.com

words: Ben Hobson pic:Al Baker

drumsound & bassline smith

ATM Issue 72 Cover CD Feature

When an interviewee starts with a response of 'you're going to have to do better than that' to your first question, things can go two ways. Firstly the interview lasts for approximately 45 more seconds until there is an ego meltdown from both sides of the table and the air turns bluer than a Roy Chubby Brown show; or you end up with an interesting interview. We've got this far so you can assume the second.

What was the brief for this issues cover mix CD?
Bassline: We were asked to put some dubplates in the track listing, so the track listing is primarily dominated by unreleased material, because that's what we were asked to do. Simple! On that basis, there are about 12 unreleased tracks, about 6 or 7 from Drumsound and Bassline Smith, then four from Terravita who are new recruits to the Technique Recordings stable and then a couple from Phetsta. You get the call now and again from a magazine to do a mix and, you know, it's nice to be able to give something back.

The first track is a brand new track by myself and Drumsound and features the vocal talents of Youngman MC. It's a track called 'Everybody Pump' and it starts off very atmospheric and deep and then switches into a crazy jump-up tune, which I personally think could be a big tune. From playing it out, it's been getting a good response. After that the tunes just come flying in and out really, I mean how can you describe a mix?! Just listen to it!

You've got some new talent on Technique on the mix; enlighten us to how those signings came about?
Bassline: We discovered Phetsta about 2 years ago when a friend hit me up on AIM and said 'You've got to listen to this guys stuff' and we immediately thought this guy was good. We had a few conversations and basically off that just signed him up. That was two years ago and he's just released his 'Congo EP' on Technique and that's been doing really well, as he's got this unique sound.

The guys we've recently signed, Terravita, they're from Boston in America, and I was over on tour in January and went into their studio where they played me loads of stuff, I brought back a couple of CDs and decided that these guys had the talent and the drive to succeed in what is a difficult market place. They've got the right attitude and we're expecting big things from them over the next couple of years from them.

So Technique are bringing some cross Atlantic flavour to the mix. What do you think about the attitude towards international talent? Has there been quite a shift in recent years?
Bassline: Yeah, but I don't think that's so prevalent nowadays. I think if you go back maybe 5 years there might have been a subconscious feeling that was going on, but the world is a big place and to be honest with you the most successful in drum and bass know how small the world really is because of all the travelling they do themselves. I don't think there is any of that now, if the tunes good enough and the artists are good enough then it's all good. Label managers are always looking for that next tune and that next artist that they can recruit because they know that's the future.

What do these mixes offer you guys personally? Are they a vehicle to explore all your styles?
Bassline: Yeah definitely, we do make varied styles and there are about 10 tracks from us on the mix and it's a place for us to show what we do.

What about the success of 'Odyssey'? Do you feel like, as is often the case in D&B that the accolade of achieving 'big tune' status can be a blessing in disguise? Do you feel that this one tune might be your crowning glory? And does the success of 'Odyssey' constrain you musically to a certain mould and sound?
Bassline: Drumsound and Bassline Smith will always be remembered or associated with 'Odyssey' as that was our first big tune. It has enabled people who didn't really know who we were or what our sound was to tap into us and delve a little bit deeper and see what we do, but that isn't everything about us. We do make a varied amount of different tunes and if you look at the mix you see that. There is a tune on the mix coming on Bingo called 'Let The Good Times Roll' and that's a funky little number, it's a funky little liquidy, rare groove type of thing. Also, there is a track called 'Tear Drop On And On' and that track's been in LTJ Bukem's box for the last nine months and he's playing it every set. Fabio is playing it too, so we consider ourselves producers who can make across the board style of drum and bass and at any one time you could find different tunes in different DJs boxes and they'll be ours. From a liquid tip to a heavy dance floor style, we've got it.

So how did you keep the momentum up after the whole success of 2004?
Bassline: When you make a tune like 'Odyssey' and it's as big as that was, it's going to be difficult to keep that kind of momentum up and everyone will always be looking for the next 'Odyssey' or whatever it is. You know, frankly, to have a tune like 'Odyssey' come from the camp is like most producers dream, but in this business you need to be consistent and it's important for us as producers and as a label to consistently put out the right stuff at a high quality level. If you look at the mix, there are some really big tunes on there like 'Cold Turkey', which has been causing damage, plus there is 'Scumbag VIP' which has been in boxes for the last 6 months smashing it up, so we haven't been quiet in any respect I just think the fans have moved on and we've moved on, if you do your research there are some big tunes out there.

You've got a sharp mix here of all the sounds in the scene, how do you feel about the way the scene is now defined by its sub genres rather than as a whole music? How do you feel about the separate sounds of D&B? And do you think it could ever escalate in to something more, like a division within drum and bass?
Bassline: From a personal point of view, I like to try and judge each record individually to see if it's good for me, do I like it? And can I play it? I'm not sure if it's a good idea to divide drum and bass into different genres because drum and bass is strong as a whole because of all the elements and styles within it. When you start to try and say 'here's that part of drum and bass over there, here's that part over there and here is that part in the middle,' it weakens the whole genre. Whether drum and bass is ready for a divide, I'm not sure. We've seen genres pop up over the years, some from rave music, some from house, but only a few of these divisions can happen and the music remains strong, you know. I'm not sure drum and bass is ready for that; that would be a big step. I think you just have to judge it on quality you know, the quality will always rise no matter what style or sub genre it may come from.

With so many more people making the music, it is difficult for that quality to rise to the top?
Bassline: I just think that now within drum and bass, we've got a lot of people from all over the world, making music that's a lot more acceptable than it used to be. You don't have to have thousands and thousands of pounds to put a studio together, so there are a lot of people out there making tunes and the scene is still so driven by guys that want to DJ and want to produce. The guys with new labels and new producers should be allowed to do their thing because that's how the scene was built and that's how the scene will move forward. Is there enough quality out there or not? Yes, but you've just got to find it; and it's up to DJs to play a full spectrum of quality music to help the ravers and the record buying public in their decision. It's a DJs job to enlighten the crowd into what music is out there so they can go and find it.

Any future projects you guys have got lined up?
Bassline: We're just in the studio working on some new material for an artist album, which I reckon will be about sometime next year. And we've got some hot dance floor numbers coming out over the next couple of months. We've started our label night back up, Technique Recordings presents Interface, and that's the first Friday of every month at Club Red in Derby. We've been doing a club night for about 7 years but we lost the venue for like a year, but we're back on it now. Things are looking good on that front. We're pretty much on the road doing various gigs, playing out and having fun.

Have you been anywhere to play recently that's just blown your mind?
Bassline: Yeah, definitely. I like it when I go to either Russia or L.A.; they're the two places at the moment that turn me on. In Russia they're really, really fresh and I played at the World of Drum and Bass not long ago and that was in front of 10–15,000 people, which was just phenomenal. The other end of the scale, going over to LA and playing at Nocturnal is really cool. The drum and bass scene is really healthy over there you know, maybe David Beckham will start going to some D&B parties when he's over there!

So there we have it, a truly international, cosmopolitan mix from the Technique camp and an insight into their world. Plus, if anything is going to get Golden Balls two stepping like a loon then this is it. Enjoy.

To book Drumsound and Simon Bassline Smith check out www.urbanagency.co.uk for more details.

ATM ISSUE 72 COVER CD TRACKLISTING MIXED BY DRUMSOUND & SIMON 'BASSLINE' SMITH

01. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
INTRO - DUB

02. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH FEATURING YOUNGMAN MC**
EVERYBODY PUMP - TECHNIQUE DUB

03. **PHETSTA**
THE BLOODENING VIP - TECHNIQUE

04. **DIGITAL**
DEADLINE (DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH REMIX) - FUNCTION RECORDS

05. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
SKUMBAG RIP - TECHNIQUE

06. **TERRAVITA**
ADULT ROBOT KUNG FU - TECHNIQUE DUB

07. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
TEARS DROP (ON & ON) - TECHNIQUE DUB

08. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
HARDER - TECHNIQUE DUB

09. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
ROBOTIX - TECHNIQUE DUB

10. **TERRAVITA**
RAPEALLY - TECHNIQUE DUB

11. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
JUNGLE - TECHNIQUE DUB

12. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
GOOD TIMES ROLL - BINGO

13. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
COLD TURKEY - TECHNIQUE

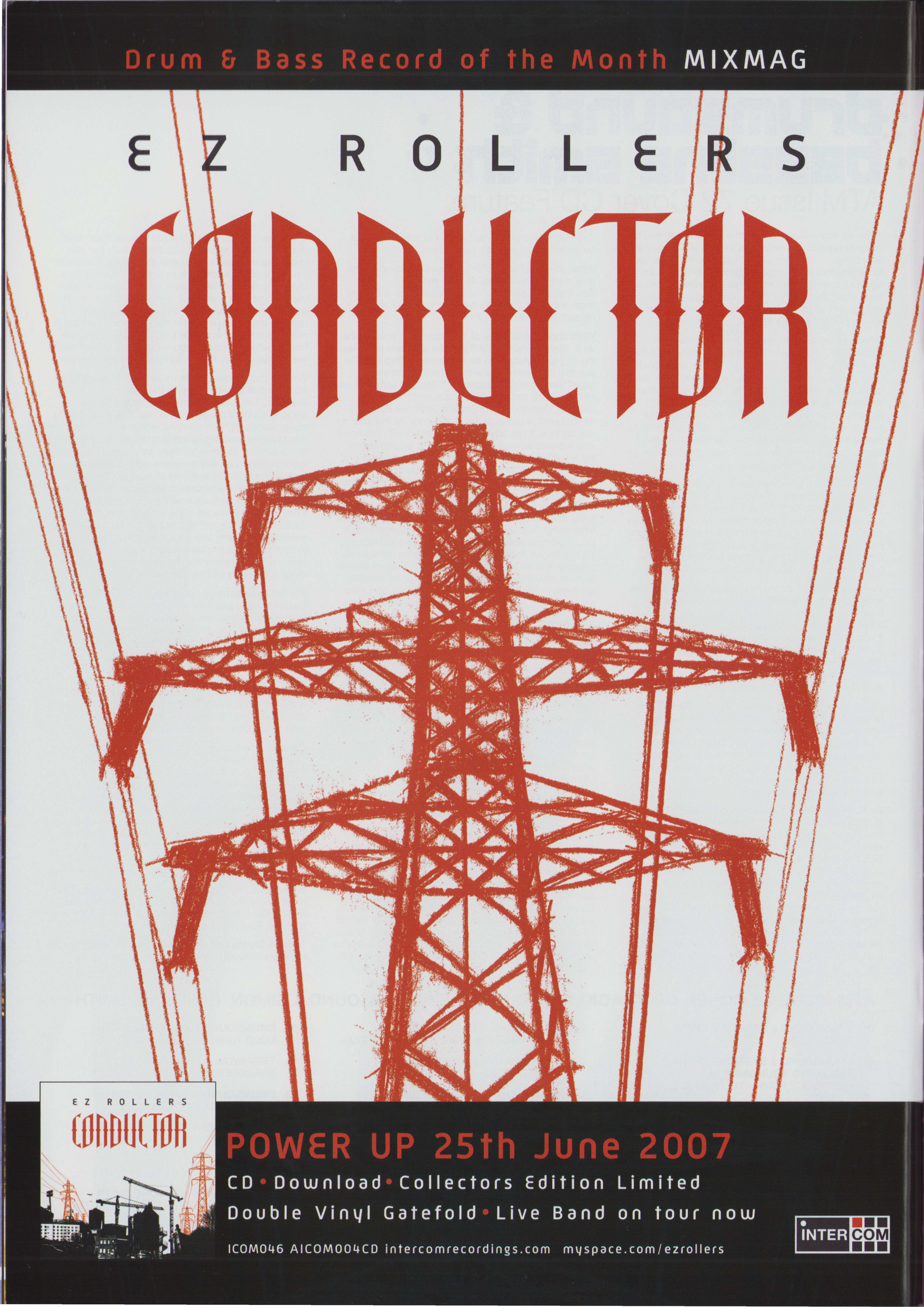
14. **TERRAVITA**
SNAGGLETOOTH - TECHNIQUE DUB

15. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
TIJUANA - TECHNIQUE DUB

16. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
DATASTREAM - FORMATION RECORDS

17. **TERRAVITA**
QUANTUM PHYSICS - TECHNIQUE

18. **DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH**
IT CAME FROM MARS - TECHNIQUE DUB



words: Mark OD pic: Mofo Photography

ATM Hall Of Fame 001: RANDALL

Welcome to ATM Magazine's Drum & Bass Hall Of Fame. Every issue we will be inducting someone new, in recognition, of their significant contribution to the evolution and continued development of drum'n'bass, so you latecomers might want to pay attention! What better way to kick off than with one of the most larger-than-life characters in the game; someone who commands respect from all corners of the D&B world, it's the 'Mac Daddy', Mr 'Too Hot To Handle', DJ Randall!

For starters let's hear from the big man on being the first inductee: "I'm honoured, I gotta give love out to a lot of people who put me on at parties because I was just a party-goer myself. I love the music, I got blessed, I got on the pirate radio (Centreforce FM 88.3), back in the day and it went from there."

Centreforce FM is a name that will be familiar to those from a certain era, as it was one of the most important pirates that transmitted on the capital's airwaves in the late '80s. "Centreforce had a wicked run," says Randall, "it was on 24 hours a day for 6 months in one spot, in flats in Stratford. When they got raided, they started to move around a bit, and Fantasy FM came on and took it to another level by doing parties at Astoria."

Pirates back then were very much the promotional hub of the time; a place where you could find out about all the events taking place and where the action was at. "I was on it for about a year and half," Randall explains, "my slot was 10-12 on a Saturday night after George Kelly, it was a primetime set. I used to give out all the info for the parties, all the gigs and the meeting points. I remember a few years later playing in Rocket Club, Fabio used to say to me 'man we used to listen to you to find out where to go.' Obviously back then they didn't know where the raves where!" says Randall with good humour in his voice.

With his residency at Rocket Club, gigs at the big raves, plus seminal guest sets at The Edge in Coventry, Randall's reputation as a razor-tight mixer of cutting-edge underground music was assured. Talk of the Rocket Club brings back some funny memories. "When Rocket was running I did it with Fabio, Groove, Gachet and Rap, that was in 1991. Terry Turbo was there and he was called MC Free & Easy then, I remember Goldie used to go and take the Mic off him and say 'even I sound better than him Rand!' It was good fun."

Not long after, he got his first overseas gig with the Reinforced crew. "The first party I played at abroad was with 4-Hero and Goldie in Zurich, Switzerland. We played this big party with Krome & Tyme, and then we went to some afterparty. At the afterparty, the decks were in a plane cockpit, it had no wings, and we had to walk in the back of the plane and go into cockpit to get to the decks that overlooked the dance floor. What they were playing was so bad we just had to takeover! We run them out! They were all techno heads and we had our breakbeat but we didn't care. We just thought 'we're in an airplane cockpit that's deep!' Ha-ha!"

Randall has always been known for his associations. Centreforce, Reinforced, Metalheadz and of course AWOL are just a few of the legendary organisations he's been involved with. 'AWOL: A Way Of Life – Live' has become part of jungle folklore; it's a recording that captures the rawness of jungle in the mid-'90s like no other. Randall's three track mega-mix saw him drop 'Sound Control V.I.P' to a cacophony of whistles and horns but he had other things on his mind. "In a way I was thinking 'fuck are any of the tunes going to jump on us? Is anybody going to accidentally clang it out?' It was a surreal night, I remember walking into Ministry, and it was weird, there were microphones everywhere and everyone was there, cos it was 3 records each and it was live. Everyone did it on point. It was an honour."

And so we jump forward to 2007. At a recent Transit event in Manchester, Randall dropped a special 'underground classics' set which contained everything from Doc Scott's masterpiece 'Swarm' to Krust's Bristol bouncer 'Set Speed' and therein lies Randall's everlasting appeal: he can draw from all corners of the D&B spectrum, playing purist one moment and rave-edged the next.

What plans does he have to keep at the top? "I'm getting my label (Mac 2) kicking off again. I just done a tune with Vapour, and that will hopefully go on Mac 2 as well." There's also news of a mix CD due late July / August. "I'm just compiling a mix CD, there's 30 tracks on it. I've done all the artwork; it's just getting the actual tunes out of everyone as I didn't want too many tunes from one label."

When it comes to people who have broken through in recent years, can you name a D&B DJ who has pretty much done it all on their turntable talents? Answers on a postcard if you can think of an answer. Unless you got beats, or a label to back you up it's nigh on impossible these days and that's not something lost on DJ Randall. "I've been blessed and I'm always thankful for what happens in this game. It's hard to get into this thing and to be consistent. If you're not producing it's hard, and as I'm not a producer I'm just thankful that I'm still rolling."

Randall we salute you!

www.myspace.com/ranstar88

die & clipz

Bristol Fashion

words: Jon Ethics pic: Hacker Photography

The City of Bristol's drum and bass heritage needs little introduction in these pages. From the early genre-defining work of the Full Cycle collective, through to the anthemic new-school jump-up of its latest 'rave stars', Bristol has always been a place world-renowned for its association with the bass and the drum.

Today, in the back garden of a lazy pub in the heart of the city, nestled beneath sky-rising tower blocks and period architecture, and with the early summer sun streaming down, ATM is lucky enough to be meeting two local artists who represent both ends of the drum and bass timeline and whose collaborative efforts have won them universal praise in providing some of the last three year's biggest tunes.

To my right sits Clipz, a new-school producer in every sense; responsible for some of the most heavily-rotated plates and some of the catchiest melodies ever to hit drum and bass, and a man whose strikingly different, rave-centric sound is without doubt the most discussed in the scene. To my left, Die, one of the true D&B pioneers; a man whose music was not only integral to the legendary labels and projects such as V, Full Cycle, Breakbeat Era and Reprazent, but to the evolution of drum and bass and its sound, winning the Mercury Prize in the process and achieving just about everything that's possible in this scene.

It is together, however, that the pairing have produced some of their biggest and best-received tracks, bringing both Die's name firmly back to the front of the scene and Clipz's talent to irrefutable appreciation beyond his usual fan base. With 2004's 'Monorail' setting a standard that has been consolidated by massive tunes like 'Number 1' and the truly classic 'Black Doves', alongside producing and remixing tracks like 'Get Closer' for Ben Westbeech's highly acclaimed album on Giles Peterson's Brownswood, the Die & Clipz combination has proven to be nothing less than devastating both in the dance and on the airwaves.

So, how was it that two artists, independently famed for very different sounds and who achieved pre-eminence in very different eras, came to join forces both in the studio and behind the decks? Die is first to answer: "A few years back, a friend of mine was round my house and he'd bought a CD over of this guy's music he said I should listen to. He put it on and it was 'Mystic Amen'; just a lashing amen track. As soon as I heard it, I was in it. That night I took it to Fabric and busted it there. From then on we started getting all the Clipz tunes and they were straight smashers, and you need those; the bashers in your set, man. Clipz provided a steady supply of them, and he was just a breath of fresh air. He was welcome on Full Cycle."

Following on from Clipz's signing to Full Cycle, it was in 2004 that the duo's first collaboration, the warping roll and funk declaration of 'Monorail', announced them as a combination to watch. "I've always rated Clipz's production; super clean, super tight. When we got together on that track we caught a vibe. Clipz was real forward in bringing back that old Die vibe. When we hit that, we knew there was something going on, a common bond. It's exciting making music with someone else and pushing each other," Clipz continues, "we bring something new out of each other definitely. It can get really intense though; we argue a lot in the studio, tell each other what to do, but we know when we get together we've gotta make music, a proper tune; it can't just be a five minute throwaway plate. The whole album project we had was vocal tunes. People are hungry for more than just instrumental tunes these days."

In drum and bass, we're all used to waiting far longer than we'd like for albums to hit the shelves; it's part of the nature of the scene. Die & Clipz's highly anticipated long player, however, has not just been delayed, but stripped down, re-focused and redirected.

"Well right now we're both just pushing on with our own labels," states Clipz. "There's a Die & Clipz EP upcoming on my new label Audio Zoo, that's gonna feature some of the best tunes that we originally made for our album. We spent a good year making tunes for it; a lot of vocal tunes, but by the end of the year, with our labels happening and everything it just didn't feel right. So now tunes like the vocal version of 'Work It Out' with Jenna G and the special mix of 'Number 1' - the real big tunes - are gonna come on that EP."

"Next year I'll be launching my label too", adds Die, "with the first release being 'Slowburn' and a vocal track I've done with Ben Westbeech, who sang on 'Number 1', of course, called 'The Reason Why'."

So, with Clipz's label already flourishing, Die's plans firmly set for his, and the long awaited album switching labels and streamlined to an EP, it has to be asked what's happening with Full Cycle? The truth is far less dramatic than some might hope. "Well Full Cycle's definitely gonna slow down, but it's not dead," says Die. "Right now Krust's working away devising his next master plan and there'll be more releases coming on there as well as on V-Cycle, but it just really seemed like the right time for us both independently to start our own labels. Full Cycle is always gonna be a part of me, but it's been 10–15 years and there's a time when you've gotta have some self-exploration"

Clipz is keen to back this up by qualifying his reasons for focusing on his own label and easing back from the label that brought his name to the pinnacle of the scene. "I just wanted to start mine really to put my own imprint out, be in control of artwork, videos, promotion…with your own label you can do that kind of thing, can't you? That's why I started Audio Zoo; so I can do what I want with the whole concept …you may not make any money, but you can put all your effort into it so you get maximum out of it. You've got the tune there, it's about turning it into something else; I need to feel full in my belly, not full in my pocket."

Clipz is certainly a man of the multi-media age; with a video for his recent anthem 'Download' only a YouTube search away, his most recent Audio Zoo releases, 'Rubbish' and 'Push It Up', currently occupy the top two positions in D&B Arena's Download chart, and coming with a full colour marketing campaign, it's pretty clear that he knows his audience and exactly how to reach them in today's ever shifting music industry.

"I wanna bring some colour to the music, man," Clipz enthuses, "I wanna feel when I'm making music like I've got a yellow paintbrush splodging across a canvas, a big fat brush, dripping with sticky gooey paint. I feel colour a lot when I'm making music and I want to reflect that in the whole package. You can put it in a black bag, sell 5,000 and make a bit of change, but you can put it in a nice sleeve, do posters, do a video and it's more fun and creative; people can connect with it more. D-Style and that lot are doing it well; they can see it's all about building for the future and utilising all these new media to promote things properly."

The internet is, however, a double-edged sword for drum and bass, and high-profile artists like Clipz. On one hand it allows the music to reach an audience far larger and more diverse than has ever previously been possible, while on the other it provides a platform for anyone to speak their mind, stir shit or just be plain hurtful in their appraisal of some of the scene's most prominent members and their music.

"Sometimes I find the internet and what people say about me really funny, but sometimes I just think 'You wankers!'. It can make me think 'I don't want to be a part of this'. It's embarrassing for me as a D&B producer to have people like that representing our scene; talking rubbish on the internet all day. It's funny, but it's hard to not let it affect you. It can turn me off making D&B. I got into music to add on, not to have kids chatting shit about me. I didn't get into drum and bass for that culture!"

Die, in contrast, has managed to avoid the slings and arrows of outrageous forums for much of his career and has a far more philosophical take on the subject. "To me, that world only exists if you log in. It can stay in cyberspace, 'cause right here and in a rave that shit doesn't exist. I don't log in or log out."

"But, man" Clipz adds, "your videos and interviews, Die, they're on there, the feedback's there. Bad press is good press, it can make you smile. It's someone's personal opinion and they're entitled to that, but music's not about that, music's about a feeling."

In this way, drum and bass could be seen to be a victim of its own success; the size of today's scene means it is big enough to provide enough music, nights and DJs to satisfy a wide variety of speciality tastes and cultures beneath the all-encompassing umbrella of D&B. Accompanying this comes inevitable criticisms from one area of the scene towards another. With promoters specifying nights as liquid, dark or jump-up and many DJs playing sets to satisfy these niches, how do Die & Clipz feel about the increasingly schismatic nature of drum and bass in 2007?

"The problem is that people are boxing shit up, with their noses in the air," Clipz is quick to say. "If a promoter books Andy C for a 'liquid' night he'll still play what he wants cos he's feeding the crowd. He'll drop some G-Dub or Dillinja, and the crowd and the promoters, they'll love it! They won't care. The whole point of rave music back in the day was bringing genres and people together, but now people are trying to segregate things." Die is quick to confirm these perceptions. "You know if you go and see a DJ and he's playing across the board, all styles, that's wicked. When he drops that mad Equinox tune, it works, they're all essential pieces of the jigsaw puzzle. Andy, Friction, DJs like that, they understand the importance of all of that, playing all the sides."

"People want that collage," continues Clipz, "you want that mixture on your iPod. The major difference between now and the '90s is that back then you were either into indie guitar music, or heavy metal and rock or you were into rave. It was a whole culture of tribes. Now those silly barriers have been dropping down, but inside drum and bass, people are doing the opposite and trying to split things up. I'm into deep house, hip-hop, and nu rave, and really feel that there's not such strong tribes as there was; only following a certain sound and only going to this or that night, those tribes are dead. It's just music now. It's a good thing. It's a great time to be in British music now as a whole; European music, fashion, culture…it's as exciting as '80s New York right now, and we both just love being a part of it!"

Catch Die & Clipz with Jenna G at Glastonbury, Innovation In The Sun and a rave near you throughout the summer and beyond.

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Black Sun Empire

Rene, Micha & Milan

BLACK SUN EMPIRE
RECORDINGS

If there was an award for the most underrated producers in drum & bass then Black Sun Empire would surely have six of them lined up in their bathroom by now. Black Sun are one of the few acts in drum & bass with true potential to open up doors into a different world, they are exceptional in what they do.

Hailing from Utrecht, Holland, Black Sun Empire began their musical career in the early '90s, crafting many different styles of electronic music, however towards the end of that decade the emerging sounds of labels such as Virus, No U Turn and Bad Company set them on the path to creating cinematic, dancefloor drum & bass and the trio hasn't looked back!

Since 2002 Black Sun Empire Recordings has been a home for their musical vision and in that time has seen their reputation for releasing uncompromising drum & bass grow and encapsulate a hardcore worldwide following. With no less than two solo albums, two of their own record labels, a string of high profile releases on D&B's most respected imprints, a worldwide fan base that is as diverse as it is loyal and a DJ schedule that's as hectic as an epileptic in a strobe factory, Black Sun Empire are well on their way to achieving the mainstream success they clearly deserve.

Five years on from their launch, 2007 sees the Dutch trio release their third album project, this time it's a compilation affair with aural assistance from Noisia, State of Mind, Bad Robot, Optiv and Jade as well as Black Sun Empire's own inimitable productions. This third effort is entitled 'Endangered Species' and is dropping on vinyl in a series of EPs, the first of which has been flying off the shelves like turkeys at Christmas time and the second of which is already receiving widespread critical acclaim, look out for the third bassbin busting EP and the full CD release with plenty of bonus material... 'Endangered Species' is set to be Black Sun's most successful album yet!

"Still pushing the boundaries of tech influenced Drum & Bass" - DJ Friction

Robotix

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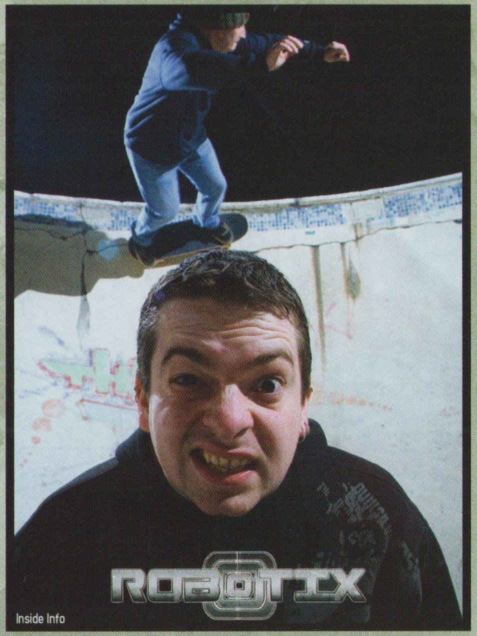
Wait, wait, sorry, Robotix is not a state-of-the-art, artificially intelligent home cleaning system, it is in fact the latest forward thinking Drum & Bass label distributed exclusively by Nu Urban Music. If you want heavy, dancefloor orientated D&B then this is for you!

The first release comes from a hugely talented new producer who's already had his productions snapped up by Ganja-Tek and Terrafunk. Inside Info's 'Caffeine' and 'Perfect Crime' (feat. Ruth S) are already being pressed onto space age vinyl as we type this, and by the time you've got this magazine in your hands it'll be ready to buy in all good futuristic record shops.



Inside Info

Chronic

Bryan G

Bryan G's big, bad and heavy label continues to put the smackdown on sound systems across the globe with their latest pair of ball breaking bassbin busters. First up Chronic 035 hits hard with the G Dub remixes of Monoman's 'Dirty Games', both sides of this 12" are like an epic ride into deep and dirty jump up territory and fans of G Dub's recent 'Beast City' EP will need to have this in their box.

Following on from that massive slab of pestilent wax comes Chronic's 36th release, this time from some fresh names but without compromising on the quality. Subwave is the latest producer on the scene that 'everyone's talking about', and when you hear 'So Twisted' you'll realise why, twisting and urgent bleeps mingle with stepping, crispy breaks and a rib crushing, distorted bassline. Ninebar steps up on the flip with the equally repulsive 'Stand Up' a foul blend of dancefloor disease that'll spread through crowds like VD in a whorehouse.

Both of these heavy hitters are taken from the forthcoming 'Big, Bad & Heavy' album mixed by Ruffstuff & Mosus, a double CD affair packed with dancefloor favourites. 'Big, Bad & Heavy' is out later this year, all good things come to those who wait!

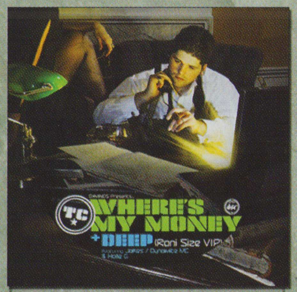
CIA

Fresh off the back of the critically acclaimed Bungle album, those Total Science chaps aren't letting up the pressure one bit; with two more Bungle 12"s coming on CIA, including the vocal led dancefloor favourite 'Just A Little Bit Closer' feat. MC Darrison and the absolutely massive tear-out rawness of G Dub's 'Resized' remix.

CIA Limited sees a pair of excellent re-rubs as Break takes on the Total Science classic 'Breakfast Club', adapting all of the characteristics of the original and turning it into a monster of a tune that's got all the subtlety of a chilli flavoured brick! While Beta 2 & Zero Tolerance's 'Secada' gets an up to date reworking on the flip.

The CIA re-release series keeps on strong with 'No 1 Sound' (Ebony Dubsters Remix) seeing a welcome return to the vinyl format, on the back of that one is the Funky Technicians' 'Airtight'. And rounding things off the Total Science boys enlist Frontline favourite Taxman to remix 'Splittin Atoms' 'Bulletproof Monk' backed with 'Smash It'. Want our tip for 2007? Keep it Total Science!

Quiffy & Smithy



TC
Where's My Money
D Style

DJ Hazard
Gun Fingers
Frontline

Lomax
Brain Freeze EP
Spearhead

Heist & AMC
Spells Of Evil / Beautiful Chinese Girl
Pandemic

Various Artists
In The Woods Part 2
Zombie

Tommy Boy
Feel The Magic / Loving You
Stereotype

Sparfunk & DCode / Inside Info
The Apocalypse / The Argonauts
Terrafunk

Jay-line and Ian D
Funky Soul / Roo Burger
Finn People

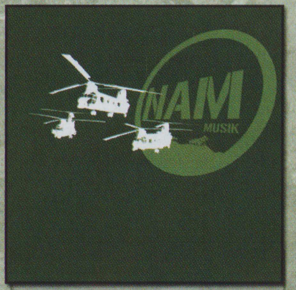
DJ Phantasy & Nicky Blackmarket
Crank (featuring MC Skibadee)
Easy

Survival
Dawning / Shadow
Osiris

Malfoy
Street Fighter
Junction 11

J Magik & Wickaman
Space Invasion
Infrared

Various Artists
The Masters Series Volume 1
Basement



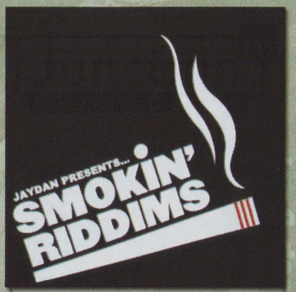
Nicol & Majistrate
The Prodcut / Wake Up
NAM Musik

Subwave & Ninebar
So Twisted / Stand Up
Chronic

Architex
Altitude (Blu Mar Ten Remix & Original)
Basement

Crissy Cris
Us / Rat Patrol
Mix & Blen'

Brockie, DJ Kane & Ed Solo
Stampede / Outboard
Sonic Art



Jaydan
Felony / Crank
Smokin Riddims

Descent / Osiris
Translation / Next Selection
Climate

/// workin' class heroes

SKORE 204 a religious experience

/// **SKORE's** contribution to the UK graffiti scene is immeasurable. For the past 20 years, his output has been a staple part of the subculture, participating in every aspect of the art-form. His development of lettering styles, combined with his technical skill and original flair has kept him as a primary influence for many graffiti writers worldwide. This month we follow **SKORE** around the globe on his **ADIDAS** x **FOOTLOCKER** x **END II END PROJECT** world tour. **SKORE** alongside **DRAX** are currently creating the definitive archive of London's graffiti history as a personal project, due for completion sometime soon. To get more of your **SKORE** fix check: **http://www.myspace.com/skoretrc**

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SILUETA / SMART / ATOM / CAN2 // END 2 END SUBWAY SIDE A / NEW YORK / 2007

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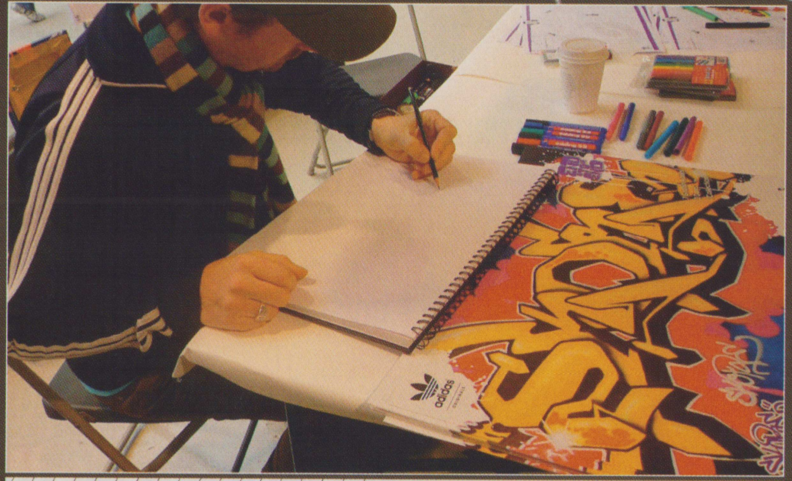
SKORE // END 2 END BUS / 2007

ATOM / CAN2 / SKORE / SMART / 2007



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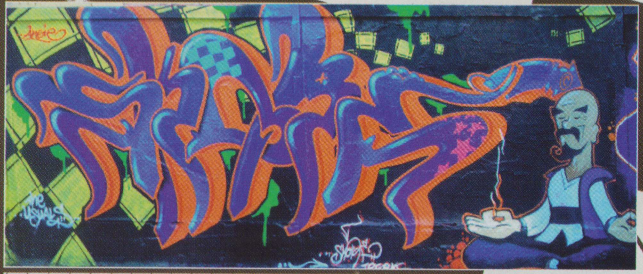

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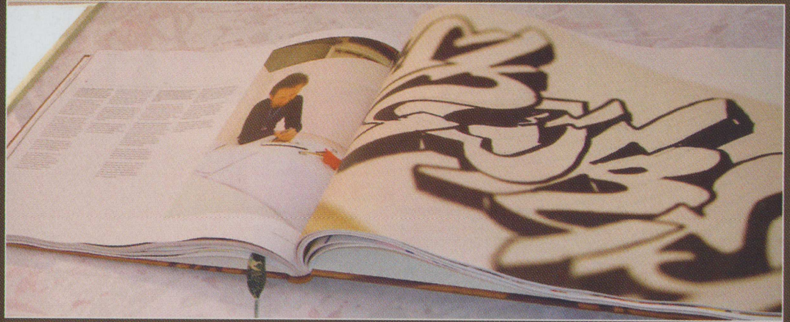

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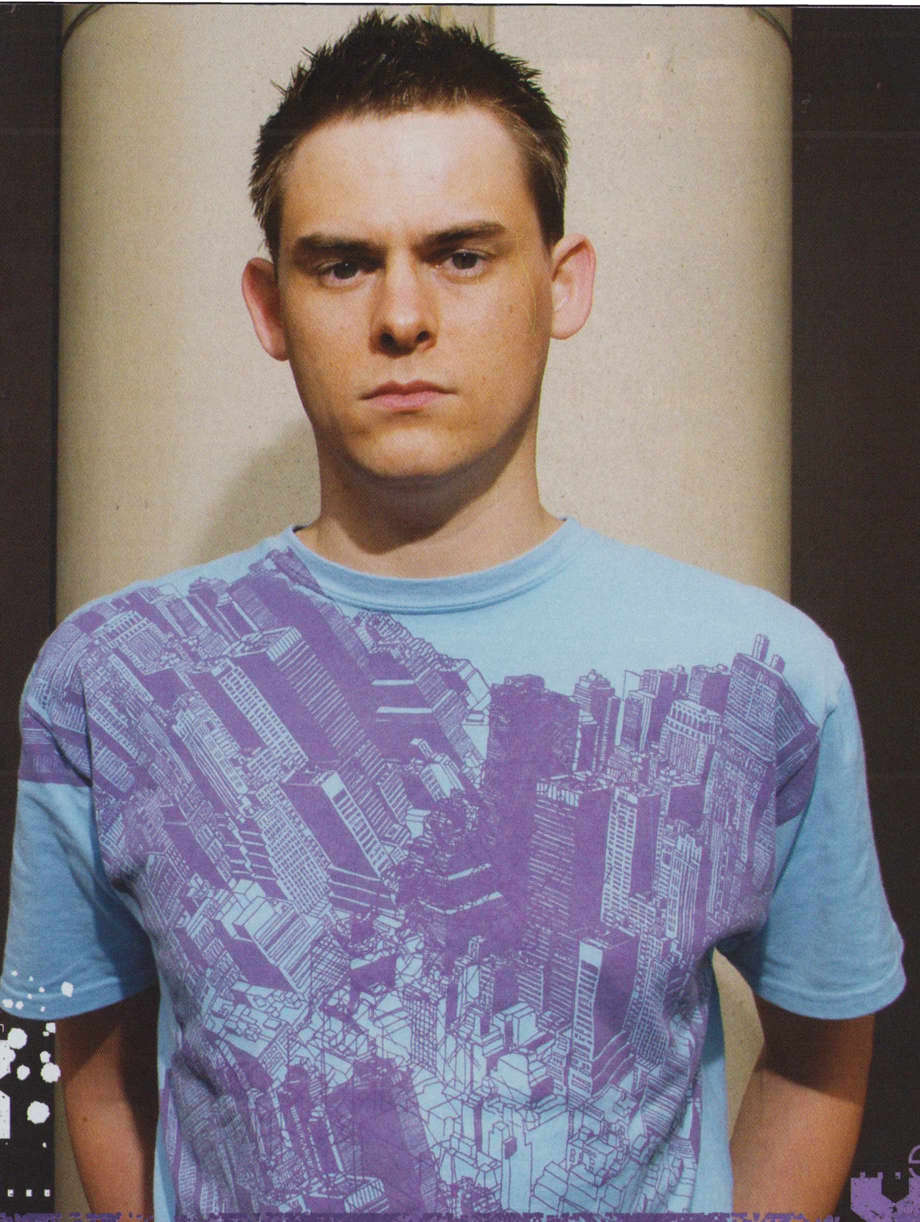


words Hayze Done pic: Cleveland Aaron

Lynx
Year Of The...

Originally hailing from Portsmouth and now living in London, Steve Nobes, aka DJ Lynx, has come a long way since producing early rave music with friends some 15 years ago. He has now firmly cemented his place in the D&B / dance scene and is many people's one to watch in 2007. Listening to the arsenal of tracks he has forthcoming it's not hard to see why.

From a young age Lynx had a very healthy interest in music and, following a work experience placement, he began working at Airtight studios in Chichester. With recognised producers, such as Stakka, Skynet, Skinny, Friction and Raiden around him, it's not surprising to hear that he picked up a few tips along the way and was soon co-managing Airtight, continuing to produce, but on a much more serious level.

Over the next few years, Lynx had numerous releases on labels, such as Underfire, Audio Blueprint, Renegade Recordings, Nu Directions, and TOV. Tracks, such as 'Meltin Pot' & 'Special Agent', all got heavy rotation by Andy C, Ed Rush & Optical, Kemal and more, whereas the deeper 'Time-Out', co-produced with Frenchman DJ Flow, received airplay from many, including the legendary John Peel. Lynx also released tracks under the name Sicknote on labels, such as Against The Grain (Krafty Kuts label) and Botchit Breaks.

Fast-forward to summer 2006 and you reach the year that people really began to take notice of the producer known as Lynx. With massive support from two of the biggest figures in the scene, Fabio & Marcus Intalex, it didn't take long for producers and DJs alike to realise the quality of and, more importantly, the freshness of the sound that was coming out of Lynx's studio.

"I would say I have only just properly broken into the scene in the last year through continued support from Marcus and Fabio," he says. "They both hold so much prestige within D&B that, once they were playing 'Mariachi', it provided the foot in the door."

Lynx has also been collaborating on a number of tracks with other producers like Malibu Rhodes, Henree, Alix Perez & Aaron Jay. These collaborations have been highly successful, with 'Mariachi', co-produced with Malibu Rhodes, set to be one of the biggest tracks this year. Snapped up by Fabio for Creative Source 050 and backed with the equally deep and dirty 'Uno', these two are amongst many to watch out for over the coming months, alongside solo releases on Bingo, Digital Soundboy, Sonorous Music, DSM, Brand Nu and two more singles on Soul:R, one featuring Alix Perez. 2008 could also see the debut LP from Lynx. "I would really enjoy the process of writing an album a lot more than singles. I think my tracks are more suited to this too."

When asked his opinion on the current drum and bass scene, Lynx definitely feels the outlook is good with the styles opening up a lot more in recent years. "Liquid has opened up to encompass a whole 'deeper' sound that easily crosses over with what producers like Teebee have been doing for years. I think this can only be a positive change for the future."

As more people stand up and notice Lynx's tracks, the demand to hear him DJ has also increased and Steve has many gigs forthcoming in the UK and abroad. Bookings at Swerve, Fabric, HQ, Intrigue, Percussion Sessions, Rotation and more will certainly keep him busy. Let's hope he still has time to get in the studio! Lynx's selection at gigs usually features at least 50% of his own material as well as other contemporaries that he is supporting, such as Calibre, Atlantic Connection, Alix Perez, Sabre and Breakage. "I get more excited to hear a D&B producer write a tune that is potentially totally unplayable in a club, but is interesting to listen to." he offers, "sadly D&B is so club-orientated, this doesn't often happen."

When asked about his influences in music, Lynx speaks of, The Prodigy, Bugz in the Attic, Basement Jaxx & Groove Armada. With The Prodigy's track 'Jericho' being responsible for Lynx's first taste of dance music. "I wasn't really that into music as a kid. I listened to chart stuff, but wasn't a big fan really. Then a friend played me The Prodigy 'Experience' album. It was like being pushed ten years ahead of time, in terms of sound, in the space of listening to one song."

Lynx is also very passionate about working with vocalists. Working with Kemo on 'Global Enemies' and 'Carnivore' has proved to be a very exciting project for him and he stresses that he is always on the look out for new talent. Perhaps for some D&B heads, on first hearing these new, slightly experimental tracks, they may find them too deep or not what they are used too, but this is exactly what Lynx is trying to do; push the boundaries rather than to be content with staying inside the box. He is always trying to raise eyebrows and come up with something new and obscure, and with massive support from Fabio & Intalex, Calibre, Al, Zinc, Grooverider and many others, we can rest easy that we'll be hearing them soon in a club or on the radio.

Outside of music you might catch Lynx at the nearest racetrack as motor racing is a favourite past time, along with playing Xbox 360 (Halo & Online Motor Sports). Music for computer games could be in the pipeline, but if we tell you all of his forthcoming ideas / projects then what will be left as a surprise?

We'll definitely be seeing and hearing more and more of the producer and DJ known as Lynx, and with his clear intention of always trying to break the rules of D&B and take the music in fresh and interesting directions, he is certainly on track to be one of the year's brightest stars.

TOP 5 LYNX PRODUCTIONS
Lynx Feat. Kemo - 'Global Enemies' - Soul:R
Lynx & Maple – 'Shaku' - Digital Soundboy
Lynx – 'Uno' - Creative Source
Lynx – 'B Box Roller' - Bingo
Lynx & Malibu Rhodes – 'Envy' - Sonorous Music

compiled by: Mark OD & Francesco Caccamo

10 of the best...

Ten Of The Best... UK RECORD SHOPS

For this issue's Ten Of The Best, ATM decided to support the cause of UK vinyl stockists. However, rather than simply listing the biggest websites around (we all know who they are anyway), we decided to give props to those shops who, in the face of all the doom and gloom, still beaver away tirelessly selling records over the counter, maintaining that human element around which record shopping, and therefore to a large extent our scene was founded on.

Most importantly, these shops act as a vital link in the chain: they're places where promo whores can get packs instead of spunking their cash on dodgy gear.

Lastly, this acts as an advert for vinyl. The rise of mp3 downloads and piracy are inevitable truths of the 21st century, but regardless of the fact that vinyl is surely condemned to a painful relegation to antiquity, we must fight for as long as possible to preserve and cherish the black gold we all love investing so much time and money into...

BM SOHO

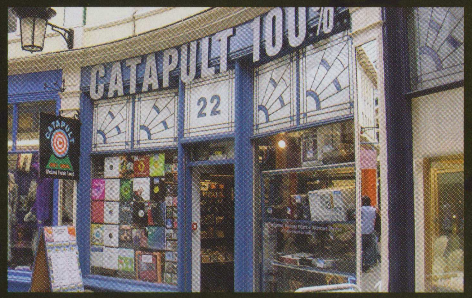
25 D'Arblay Street
London
W1F 8EJ
020 7437 0478
www.bm-soho.com
mailorder@bm-soho.com

BM Soho (formerly Black Market Records) is the UK's most notorious underground dance music record store. Established in Soho, London, in 1990, BM Soho has been at the forefront of underground dance music ever since and visiting its basement has been a rite of passage for jungle/drum'n'bass heads the world over.

Specialising in drum'n'bass, dubstep, garage, and soulful, minimal, tech, funky, electro and jackin' house, the shop has been filling the record boxes of the world's finest DJs for over 16 years and with staff members like Nicky Blackmarket, Ray Keith and Youngsta the shop remains firmly on the cutting-edge.

BM Soho also offers its service online. You can keep up-to-date with the latest releases by signing up to the mailing list, and there are top sellers charts, staff charts and loads more treats coming soon.

BM MUSIC



CATAPULT

22 High Street Arcade,
Cardiff,
CF10 1BB
Wales
029 2022 8990
www.catapult-records.co.uk
enquiries@catapult.co.uk

Established in 1993, Catapult is Wales' best-known dance music specialist and covers all bases from electronica through to hardcore, on vinyl, CD and tape packs. Based in Cardiff city centre, its three storey premises stock an extensive range, including DJ equipment and merchandise.

While some stores have been hit hard lately, Catapult is going from strength to strength through its new website and continued valued local support. Over the years there have been many live in-stores hosted with DJs such as Nic Fanciulli, LTJ Bukem, Inland Knights and 1Xtra. Catapult is also one time home to High Contrast, DJ Cally and 1Xtra's Richie Vibe Vee.

CATAPULT.CO.UK

EASTERN BLOC

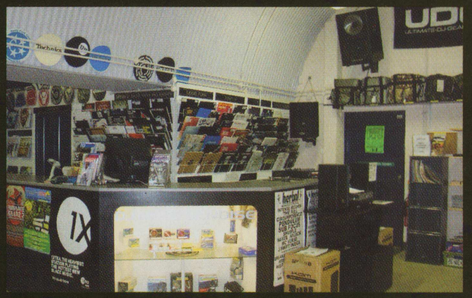
5/6 Central Buildings
Oldham Street
Manchester
M1 1JT
0161 228 6432
www.easternblocrecords.co.uk
support@easternblocrecords.co.uk

Eastern Bloc was set up in 1985 by John Berry & Martin Price of 808 State. In the late '80s, with the rise of the acid house scene, Eastern Bloc was the place where many of the major DJs would come to get their tunes.

These days they stock drum'n'bass, dubstep, techno, house, and everything else in between. Eastern Bloc strongly believes in its music policy and trusts the judgements of its specialist staff: Mark "Turbo" Turner, Jim Bane, Will "Not The Fresh Prince" Smith, and John "Bingo" Berry.

Over the last 22 years the shop has had a few well known regular customers such as Sasha, Laurent Garnier, The Chemical Brothers, Joey Beltram, Ritchie Hawtin, Eric Morillo, Ben Simms, Mark One, Future Cut, Eddie Halliwell, Mark OD, Wilf Prophecy, and Gav Xample. And ex staff include Marcus Intalex, Justin Robertson, Mark XTC, Karl Roscoe and Chris Fatboy.

EASTERN BLOC



INTENSE RECORDS

33/34 Viaduct Road
Chelmsford
01245 347372
www.intenserecords.co.uk
info@intenserecords.co.uk

Intense Records has been running for over seven years and is truly established as an underground music specialist. Situated in Chelmsford, Essex, Intense is both a walk-in shop and an online store selling all the latest releases, promos, CD and tape packs across all genres of dance music, but specialises in drum'n'bass. Intense also supplies DJ equipment, PA systems and lighting for sale or hire through sister company Intense Sound & Light.

Intense's interactive website features the freshest news, reviews, event listings, top 10s, DJ mixes, photo galleries, a forum and competitions, as well as a 30 volume strong podcast to subscribe to and the recently established 24-7 online radio station Intense Radio broadcasting direct from the shop.

SEISMIC RECORDS

6 Bedford Street
c/o Kong
Leamington Spa
CV32 5DY
01926 831333
www.seismicrecords.co.uk

At 2 years old, Seismic is quite a new shop but has a wealth of experience in founder Stuart Smith, who's worked in record shops for nearly 10 years. The shop was started at a time when many others were turning their back on vinyl as a format. Based in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, it's one of the few remaining vinyl stores left in the Midlands.

The shop specialises in drum'n'bass but also stocks breaks, hip hop and other genres, plus DJ equipment, CDs and tape packs. The shop has friendly and knowledgeable staff who are always happy to lend a hand and give advice and they even sell artwork by local graffiti artists.

The shop has gained a loyal customer base and regularly finds customers travelling from further a field to reach it As all headz know, without the small independent shops the scene wouldn't be where it is today, so support your local record shop and keep vinyl alive!

DNB SOURCE

5 Hughenden Place
Hastings
TN34 3TB
0845 058 0587
www.dnbsource.com
info@dnbsource.com

DnB Source was first formed back in June 2004. The aim of the store is to provide all the latest D&B for low prices to help promote the scene worldwide. Three years later DnB Source is challenging the established online retailers with over 3,000 customers worldwide. However they still attract many visitors to their store on the south coast in search of all the latest promos and releases and to check out their huge second hand section.

The DnB Source team hope to build upon their success by expanding the website, building a studio for local DJs to record mixes in, and continuing to promote their new label, Source Recordings Limited, with nights across the UK and abroad.

ROOTED RECORDS

9 Gloucester Road
Bristol
BS7 8AA
0117 9074372
www.rootedrecords.co.uk
peverelist@rootedrecords.co.uk

For almost 10 years, Rooted Records, on Bristol's infamous Gloucester Road, has been supplying the city's leading underground DJs with the freshest upfront cuts and classic re-issues. Jungle and drum'n'bass have always been staples of the shop, which boasts an expanding new and second hand selection. Bristol's top selectors making regular visits include: DJ Kapacity, Clipz, TC, DJ Crewz, Kubiks & Lomax, the Full Cycle crew, Cridge and many more.

In the last six years Rooted has pioneered, shaped and championed the Bristol dubstep scene. Their dubstep selection has a worldwide reputation, with Punch Drunk label owner, Peverelist, and promoter of Bristol dubstep night High Road, Chris G, providing their expertise behind the counter.

UNDERGROUND SOLU'SHN RECORDS

9 Cockburn Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1BP
Scotland
0131 226 2242
www.undergroundsolushn.com
info@undergroundsolushn.com

Founded in 1995 by DJs involved with seminal Edinburgh club nights such as Tribal Funktion and Scratch, Underground Solu'shn began as an outlet for all things underground in house, techno, hip hop, drum'n'bass, funk, disco, soul and more.

Despite the grim reports of record shops disappearing on a weekly basis, somehow Underground Solu'shn has weathered the storm, basically by being passionate about what they sell and having a devoted clientele who still enjoy rummaging through dusty record racks. In May 2006 the shop was bought by Manga promoter and D&B DJ George Macdonald (aka G Mac) who has rapidly expanded the selection to include masses more vinyl, CDs, DVDs, DJ accessories and equipment of all shapes and sizes. Pay them a visit if you're in the Scottish capital.

UNDERGROUND SOLU'SHN

REFORM

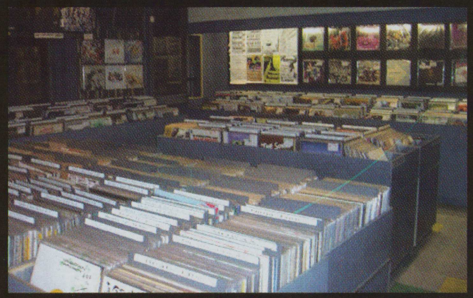
121 Fore Street
Exeter
EX4 3JQ
Tel:01392 435577
www.reform-records.co.uk
robin@reform-records.co.uk

Reform is Devon's longest running independent record shop. Based in Exeter it has been open for over 15 years. The shop sells a large variety of dance music whether on vinyl, CD or tape, and soon to be mp3.

Reform has recently branched into other avenues such as clothing, hats and trainers in order to keep on top of the current slump in dance music sales.

Reform's best selling music is without a doubt D&B, outselling all other genres put together by double, and if it wasn't for Exeter's strong drum'n'bass scene the shop wouldn't still be there today. Shop owner Robin also runs local D&B night Rinseout, which helps him keep things ticking over when the shop is quiet.

REFORM RECORDS



SELECTADISC

19-21 Market Street
Nottingham
NG1 6HX
0115 9475420
www.selectadisc.co.uk
nottingham@selectadisc.co.uk

Selectadisc has been at the vanguard of the independent music scene since 1966. Nominated for the Best Independent Retailer award each year since Music Week started, it has been awarded the title twice.

Drum'n'bass plays a significant role in the vinyl department, as it's a scene that throws its full weight behind supporting the 12" vinyl format.

The shop, through various members of the staff, has close links to Detonate, as one of the best D&B nights in the country, it plays host to countless top DJs and artists at sell out venues, and keeps locals needing their fix of the week's fresh tunes.

krafty kuts

Finely Krafted

words: Joe Gamp pic: Zen Inoya

As I sit sipping a cup of freshly-churned coffee, Krafty Kuts, the man who puts the funk back into breaks, perches on a chair to wax lyrical about his new FABRICLIVE mix, his ever-increasing popularity, and winning numerous accolades at the Breakspoll awards. Possibly one of the most honest, open and damn friendly geezers in dance music, Krafty's taken time from his usually hectic schedule to spill the beans on playing abroad and his thoughts concerning the genre. He's got quite a lot to get off his chest, so pay attention!

You've been deeply influenced by hip-hop, funk and electro. What was it that attracted you to breaking and to mix culture?
I began my musical journey running a break dancing club back in the late eighties and early nineties. I was captivated by the mix culture element of it. I started to play about on the decks, scratching and stuff, and someone once commented, 'that was a bit crafty'. It turned into an obsession! I was going record hunting at car boot sales, looking for every funk record I could, and slowly but surely I grew an amazing collection, bought a record store and it went from there. I like to think to myself, 'What can I do with the break? What is its true purpose?'

What do you think the rest of planet earth makes of your style?
Outside of the UK, I'm a bigger entity. In this country, we're too finicky, always worried with the next big thing. All these fucking stupid names and sub-genres, it's all just music. There's too much emphasis on categorisation.

So in your opinion, there are a denser number of people abroad that listen to breaks?
This country's always where it's at when it comes to breakbeat parties, but Australia and the US are calmly behind when it comes to breaks. They're not concerned with the next big thing, they just stick to what they have and put on some great parties with amazing DJs, without cramming too much in. This also includes the local talent and that's the problem here. We've got so much homegrown talent; it's laying under peoples noses.

Can you shed some light on your eagerly anticipated FABRICLIVE mix?
Doing a Fabric CD is very difficult because they are the most happening club in the world, and, in my opinion, no one even stands close to Fabric. They have the most insane line-ups week in, week out, and the best in the world. Even if you aren't into Fabric, it's still the cream. To make this CD I didn't want to make too many obvious selections. The goal was to make something that I could do live, a mix that would sum up what Krafty Kuts is about: the funk. I spent a lot of time on it, throwing in some hip-hop, accapellas and fattened out disco loops. I utilised my knowledge of music to my best to entertain the crowd, and, for me, that's what it's all about.

What's taken you so long? You've been on the cards to do one for a while now…
The timing was never right and I didn't feel ready when first asked, and then my album came out. Now it's right as my profile is high and it'll appeal to more people. I'm more of an artist in my own right nowadays. I can be broader with my range and touch more people with my tastes. It touches on all elements. I've listened to it thousands of times to make sure it's spot on.

How was playing live at Fabric for you?
It was an amazing experience and a true test. I played four hours in the main room, doing an hour with A Skills on four decks, a live show and a two-hour DJ set. It was nerve racking and overwhelming. Every emotion was there that night. We pulled it off well and the live collaborations worked. I knew I had come a long way when I was headlining the most popular club in the world.

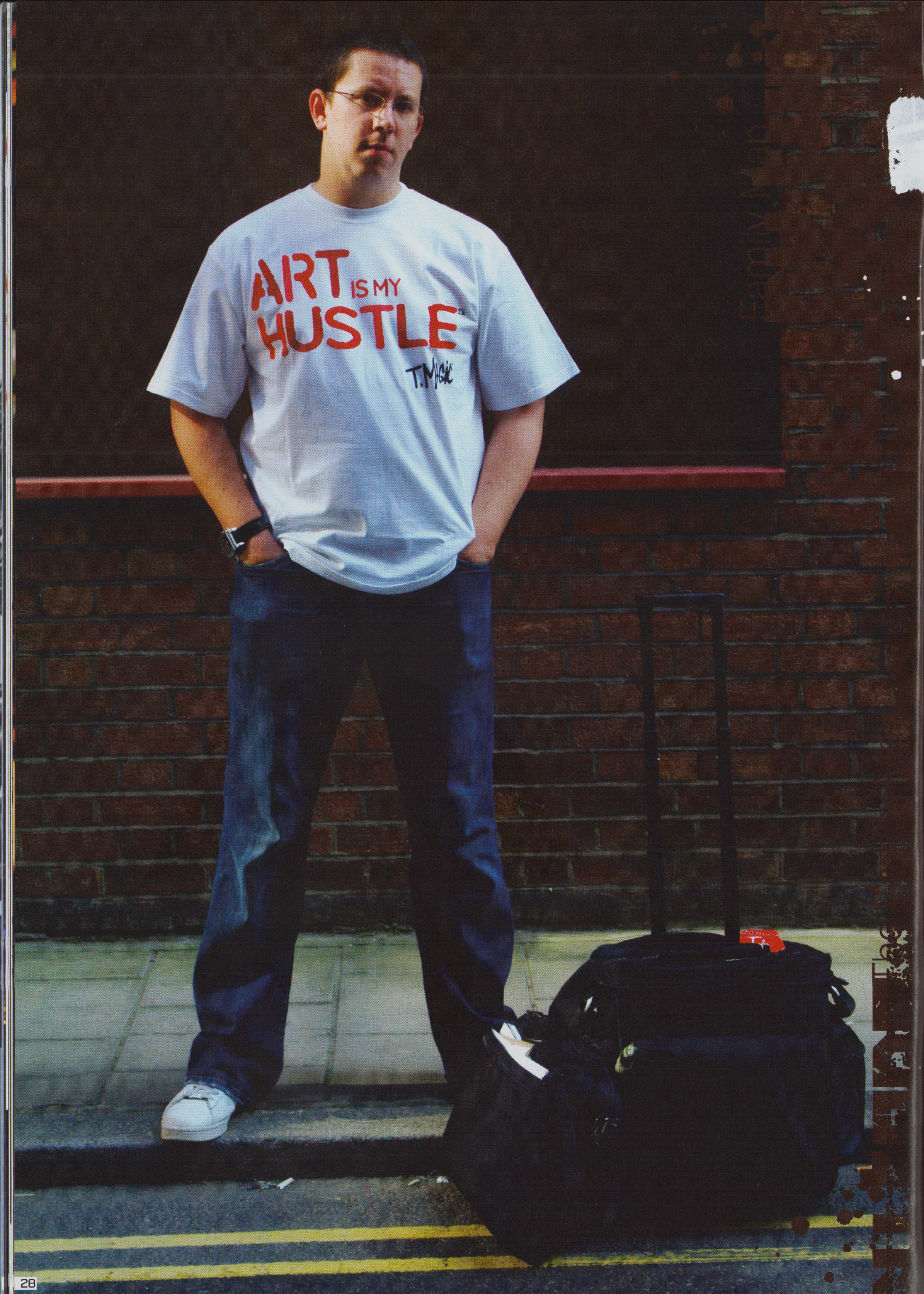
You and A Skills have had a prolific relationship. Do you still link up with A Skills regularly?
Yeah, at some point we're coming back with the four decks set and we're rehearsing it soon. We're gonna make it exactly right. A Skills is a talented producer, an excellent DJ and has a good head on his shoulders. We both toured our arses off with 'Trickatechnology'; we did 22 dates in 28 days! It was tough, but it was a good test for both of us and we did well.

With three awards under your belt after this year's Breakspoll awards and a discography as long as my arm, what's next for you? Are you going to make more artist albums?
I'm starting on my second album with some interesting collaborations with DJ Craze, Qbert, Jazzy Jeff, Dynamite, some more exciting MCs and a few surprises too. It's going to be hard to surpass 'Freakshow', but I really want to better it. Again, it'll be a test of character, but I want to reach my goals. I released lots of singles to gain recognition and keep myself busy with making tunes. When you come to a level you can slow down, concentrating on quality more, because quantity isn't as important.

How do you feel about playing numerous over-sponsored and over-hyped festivals?
Festivals in the UK put on the same line-ups and the same order of DJs, so people pay to see exactly the same as last year and it doesn't change. There's no thought process. Where are all the DJs who've earned their crust working hard, being original and creative? Where's the up-and-comers? They should make festivals smaller, less corporate and make it cheaper to gain entry by not paying thousands to top names. The best I've been to are Exit in Serbia and Shambala in BC, Canada.

What do you feel is next for the breakbeat tradition? Any tips on who's likely to blow?
It needs more producers who are taking their time, rather than rushing out loads of music not of high quality. Breakbeat is strong and it needs to take another step by consistently pulling out great stuff, like the Plumps and the Stantons do, but also more music from new, rising producers. And people need to concentrate on the positives rather than the negatives on the forums. Splitloop and Skool Of Thought have both got great albums due for release; they both take it up a level. Also, check the Beat Assassin. Breaks is deserving of more exposure. It would help it progress even further!

Krafty Kuts FABRICLIVE is out now.



words: Ollie Stoller pic: Cleveland Aaron

nu tone
The Family Man

The imminent release of Nu Tone's eagerly anticipated second album, 'Back Of Beyond', sees the Cambridge-based producer explode onto the scene in a way that we have come to expect from one of D&B's most exciting talents. With this in mind, ATM thought it would be the perfect time to catch up with one of Hospital Record's finest, to see what he's been up to, his thoughts on the new LP, and plans for the future.

Dan Gresham, aka Nu Tone, is definitely the man of the moment and we caught up with him in the middle of London's West End, straight after a show he had just recorded on Kiss FM. "I have just been doing the Drive By show, which is run by Gerard down in Bristol, and this is the third or fourth time I've done it. I usually do it with MC Wrec so it's always an enjoyable experience," he explains, as we hunt for a spot to settle down for a chat.

For those unfamiliar with Nu Tone, he originally hails from Manchester, but grew up in Cambridge where he currently resides. Nu Tone spent his early days spending countless hours trawling through record shops hunting for vinyl, which is something a lot of readers can probably relate to. "I was buying records all the time, either from dance music retailers or charity shops and all other kinds of weird places," he reveals. However, it wasn't until he encountered one of the early Full Cycle releases that he really caught the bug of jungle/D&B music, "It just really blew me away. The tracks were full of rare groove and soul samples of records that I was collecting at the time and it wasn't like any music I had ever heard before."

In terms of getting his break in the industry, Nu Tone firmly attributes it to the fact that he was pushy and not afraid to get his name out there, which serves as an example to any aspiring producers wanting to follow in his footsteps. "I was pushing. Every time there was a drum and bass night, I would take a handful of CDs," he states, "one of the biggest factors was hooking up with Marcus Intalex after meeting him at Music House. I stayed in contact with Marcus by sending him my tunes every week and I was lucky enough to be given really good constructive criticism on those tracks. Generally, it was a matter of getting things under control, stripping stuff back, and getting my tracks right down to that perfect groove. So often when you first start making drum and bass, you want to keep layering and layering your tunes with shit that doesn't need to be in there, so Marcus was really instrumental in refining my style. I give him a lot of credit for getting me where I am today."

Things really began to pick up for Nu Tone in 2003 when he was signed by Hospital Records, as he explains, "They called me up and invited me down for a meeting, and said they were interested in my stuff, but that they didn't really sign singles-only artists. At first I wasn't sure what they meant, but they told me that they wanted me to sign with them with a view for me to produce some albums." In the current cautious climate of the music industry and particularly in D&B, where labels try to minimise the risks of signing new artists by limiting themselves to signing individual tracks, the faith that Hospital showed in signing Nu Tone to a multi-album deal looks to have paid off, with two albums under his belt, that exude the style and quality that the Hospital brand represents.

Nu Tone excitedly explains how he went about making his new LP, 'Back Of Beyond'. "You try and progress from one album to the next and you try not to repeat yourself. It's easy to get stuck in a rut with your sound so I wanted to switch things up and try and maintain that core sound. The new album has definitely got more of a dance floor twist to it, but I hope that I have kept the musical style of things intact."

When artists release a debut album it can be argued that there are no preconceptions and that the real challenge can be trying to release that tricky second album, however, Nu Tone doesn't agree. "To be honest, it was actually significantly easier than the first for me to write. When I wrote my first album, I had a lot going on; I was DJing quite a lot and just finding time and motivation to go in the studio was actually really difficult. I hardly made anything for a year after my first album. Then I got married, my wife had a baby boy and we moved out to the country, which enabled me to hit a new wave of production, which just flowed. I think it's all of those factors together that made a really good environment, which helped everything come together."

Nu Tone goes on to explain how his new way of living has helped with the making of his new album. "Making tunes at night has never been the way I have worked, so for me I get up in the morning bright and early with my son, have my breakfast and hit the studio. It's not like I treat it like a job, because it's not like any job I know, but I am just focused and there's no better motivation than a family." He goes on to add: "The hardest part of making the album was getting the variety in there while keeping things coherent. You want to be able to listen to an album all the way through, but you don't want it to all sound the same, so it's something that I am always conscious of, but I don't make extra effort to try and achieve it. I just do what I do and hope my sound and my musical style will come through with whatever I am trying to do."

With such a formidable and varied line up of vocalists contributing to 'Back Of Beyond', we asked Nu Tone if he knew exactly who he wanted to work with before he started making the LP. "I'll tend to think of people I want to work with as I go along, as I tend to have a lot of sketches consisting of hundreds of tunes, some of which are 30 second loops and some of which are full tracks, but for the most part I'll tend not to finish tracks until I know exactly what it is I want to do with them. With the vocalists, I picked out which ones I wanted to work with and then went through and chose which sketches would be appropriate for each artist, although there were some tracks where I specifically made a tune for the vocalist."

Nu Tone goes on to say, "Natalie Williams sang on the last album and I really wanted to get her back in, because she is great to work with. Then there's a couple of guys called Talc who are an off-the-wall band, but they are amazing musicians and I really wanted to get them in, as I knew they would take things in a different direction. Ernesto was meant to do something for the first album, but time constraints meant it didn't happen, so I am really pleased to have worked with him on the new LP."

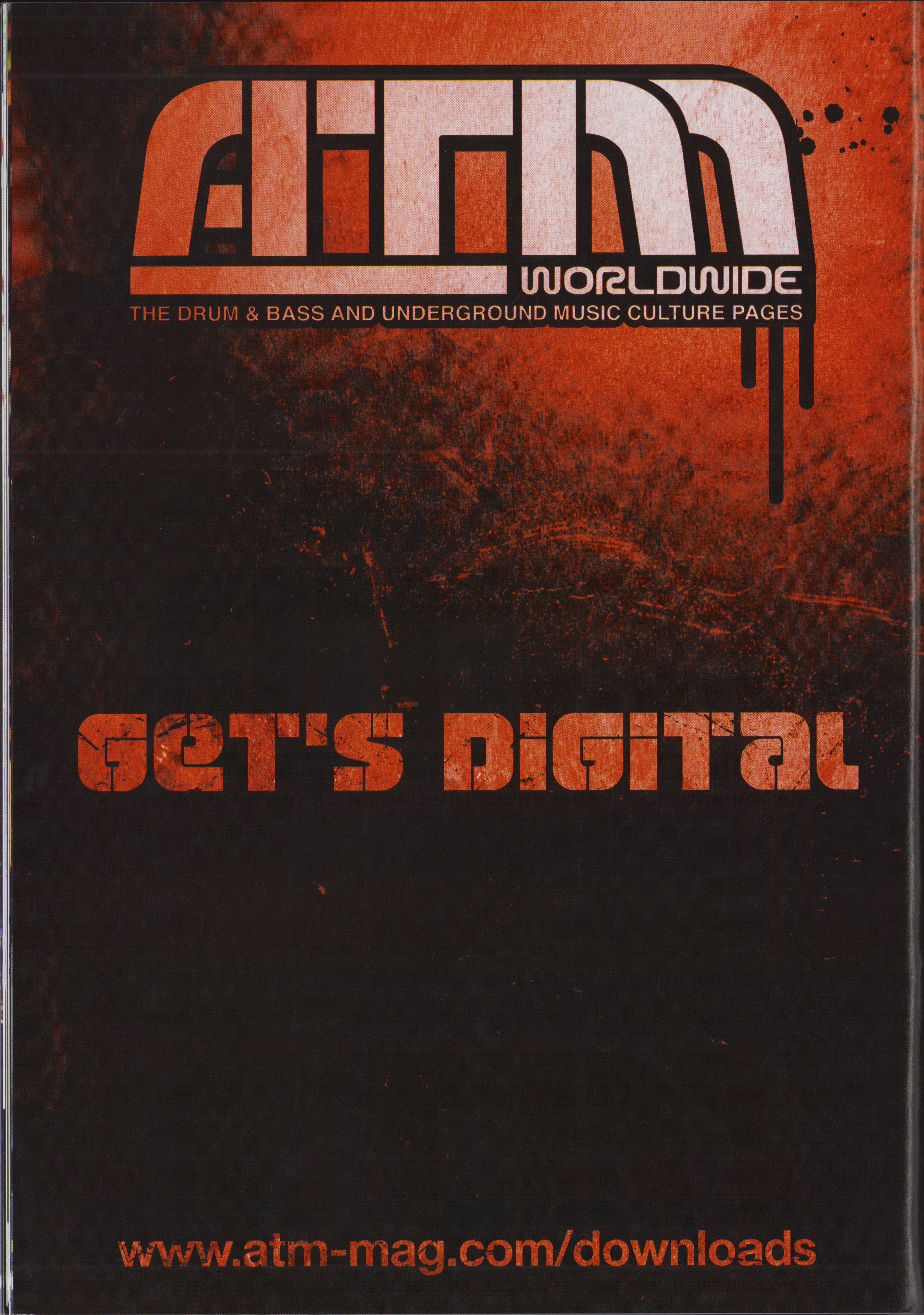
'Back Of Beyond' is already highly in demand amongst the drum and bass fraternity and is surely a contender for D&B album of the year, having impressed critics with its seamless blend of different styles and influences. There are shades of house, funk and soul, as well as a tracks such as 'Missing Link', which have a raw and energetic mid-nineties vibe to them, as Nu Tone says: "There's something about the tracks from that era; the producers of those tracks didn't care about what anyone thought, they just did what they wanted to do and they were really trying to do something different. I miss that, I guess." He then goes on to say: "I miss the rollers that are really stripped back and not having to have every millisecond filled with 50 stabs and hits. You don't have to switch everything every two bars, you just have to have a groove that rolls and that's where the inspiration for 'Missing Link' came from. It was my tribute to the Bristol rollers that inspired me, which is fundamentally what drum and bass is about; wicked drums and bad ass basslines."

Nu Tone has collaborated with his little brother Logistics, with impressive results on the tracks 'Say Hello, Wave Goodbye' and 'Never Together', which have got some people dreaming of a future Nu Tone & Logistics LP. "We have a very natural, relaxed relationship. It's really important to be honest with someone in the studio and be able to tell them when something sounds awful! But there's no problem when I am in the studio with him on that. We also have different strengths in the studio and I feel we compliment each other very well." On plans for a future album together he adds: "We have made plans to work together a lot more; it's just very difficult finding the time, because we have such busy schedules, but never say never."

As well as being one of the scenes most exciting producers, Nu Tone is also an accomplished DJ in his own right, having played at venues all over the world and being a resident at the world famous Hospital nights both in England and abroad. When asked how being a DJ has influenced his output in the studio, Nu Tone answers candidly, "You can always tell when people make dance music but don't DJ. Sometimes it works really well and sometimes it can be a hindrance. Personally, I have found it very useful, although you have to be careful, as when you play in clubs you like to drop smashers and if you are not careful that's all you end up producing."

Looking to the future, Nu Tone is keeping busy over the next few months with an intense touring schedule to coincide with the album launch. As well as this, fans can expect to see a lot more collaborative work with fellow Cambridge residents, Commix, and his brother, Logistics, both as a group and in different combinations. With all this in mind, you can expect to see and hear a lot more of Nu Tone this summer, which, for quality music lovers everywhere, can only be a good thing.

Nu Tone's second album, 'Back Of Beyond', is out now on Hospital Records. www.hospitalrecords.com



words: Jesse Keene

GURU
Voice Of A Generation

Hailed as the 'Hip-Hop-Jazz Messenger', Guru's roots have been firmly planted within the culture for well over a decade. First and foremost he was the meandering voice behind Gangstarr and, with his friend and cohort DJ Premier, they took the world by storm in the early to late '90s with albums such as 'Step Into The Arena', 'Daily Operation', 'Hard To Earn' and 'Full Clip'.

Along the way he formed the Gangstarr Foundation, which included MCs Big Shug, Jeru Tha Damaja, Afru Ra and Group Home. After many years Guru and Premier went their separate ways, but the body of work that Gangstarr produced always betrayed a deep and passionate love of the jazz movement. Guru subsequently found an outlet for this in the 'Jazzmatazz' series.

Fusing jazz and hip-hop, the 'Jazzmatazz' albums allowed Guru to use live musicians and involve a diverse group of old and new jazz cats. The roll call has seen luminaries such as Roy Ayers, Ronny Jordan and Courtney Pine working together with the vocal talents of, amongst others, Carleen Anderson and N'Dea Davenport. From the Blue Note-style cover art to the hepcat spoken-word intro, the package has always been pure hip-hop-jazz music. Now on its fourth volume, the concept is still going strong. Produced entirely by Solar and featuring acts like Slum Village, Damian Marley, Dionne Farris and Common, the result is something which is neither pure jazz nor hardcore hip-hop, but an extension of the two. Here at ATM we managed to catch up with Guru - a lyricist, who is undoubtedly one of the voices of his generation. A hard man to pin down, here is what he had to say…

Why did you first choose the name Guru? And what is the meaning behind it?
It first stood for Gifted Unlimited Rhymes Universal, but as time has gone on it has taken on a new meaning, which is that I am the guru of hip-hop. I enlighten when I rhyme.

You have been involved with and have featured on many musical projects. Which has been the most memorable?
The most memorable for me has been this new 'Jazzmatazz Vol. 4' album because the list of guests is so vast and it is filled with artists who are the best at what they do. They gave their all when it came to contributing to this record. Also Solar as a producer was honoured to have been able to work with so many great artists. This was only his second album and the fact that all of these great musicians were feeling the musical genius and craftsmanship of the tracks he created for them to play or sing over was truly a beautiful thing!

Looking at 'Jazzmatazz Vol. 4', how did you go about choosing the artists who were to feature on the album? And how difficult was it to assemble such a diverse array of talent?
We brainstormed a lot and we also achieved a great deal by initially linking up with people during our travels and on tour. Everyone showed love and respected the prestige and legacy of 'Jazzmatazz'.

What makes this new volume stand out from its predecessors?
The cohesiveness of the music, lyrics and arrangements are on a much higher level. The connection between the producer and artists is what brings it to a more intense place and we are proud of that achievement. It's a great step forward and an evolution from the previous works.

Will you be taking the album on the road and, if so, who will be involved?
We will be touring in Europe, and we have a big US tour from July 15th to August 16th. Then we will be touring Australia, South Africa, Japan and Europe again in the Fall. Solar provides the beats and we have two vocalists along with a five-piece band called 'The 7 Grand Band', as well as DJ Doo Wop on the turntables.

To finish off, can you tell us how the label 7 Grand came about? And also what artists you intend to showcase through it in the future?
Solar and I met over six years ago through a mutual friend. Solar heard and felt a lot of my frustration with execs and so called A&Rs trying to instruct and control my creativity. He suggested that I start my own label, which I did, and I then asked him to join me. We took our time putting things together and making the label grow. We released our first project 'Guru Version 7.0 - The Street Scriptures' in 2005, which received critical appraisal, sold over 100k albums and toured worldwide with DJ Doo Wop. The album was through a small distributor, but its success enabled us to land major worldwide distribution for 'Jazzmatazz' and future projects. We also have Solar's album, projects from Highpower & K. Born and DJ Doo Wop, plus documentaries and other multimedia and film projects in the pipeline, so we've got big things planned for 2007.

So, with the label going from strength to strength and the album set to make waves throughout the music fraternity, it looks like another big year for Guru...

Guru's 'Jazzmatazz Vol. 4 - The Hip Hop Jazz Messenger: Back To The Future' is out now, for more info on releases, tour dates and downloads checkout guru7grand.net.

Vicki wears Alpinestars Water Koi Zip Top £48.99

Nick wears Gravis Stay Hi tee £35.00 and King Stealth Jeans £64.99

Models: Nick & Vicki from Step 13
www.myspace.com/step13

Photographer: Zen Inoya

Fashion Co-ordinator: Seun M.

Stockists: www.king-apparel.com
www.alpinestars.com

ATM would like to thank Canoe Inc. for their help with this photo shoot.

THREADS SPECIAL FEATURE

DJ Mosus has a passion for fashion and rocks a fresh style whenever he's on road. We welcome him onboard Team ATM and in the first of a series of exclusive features, and seeing as its summertime, Mosus has set his sights on 5 new sunglasses by AM Eyewear. Over to you Mosus…

AM Eyewear hail from Australia, a land of glaring heat, not far from my own homeland of New Zealand. In this part of the world sunglasses are more than a style accessory, they're an indispensable part of daily life. Emerging from this culture of eternal sunshine, AM Eyewear have become innovative players in the modern frame game with their fresh designs.

This underground label hijacked the Ozzy market to become the hottest eyewear brand in the country. AM Eye wear became the first-ever brand of sunglasses to merit their own show at Australian Fashion Week. Meanwhile this shady business has also won high-profile admirers overseas. Liam Gallagher, Kate Hudson, Kanye West, Kelly Osbourne, Beyonce, Princess Superstar, Sienna Miller, The Strokes and The Klaxons, are just some of the celebrity clientele who've been quick to catch on.

The latest collection includes acid-tone frames you could imagine The Specials wearing under their pork-pie hats. Other frames take their cues from the slick, sharp lines of Mod culture. And then there are the oversized cobra-print shades, inspired, as founder Simon Ponnusamy says: "By an old pair of Christian Dior shoes my mum had from the '60s."

Paradoxically, these vintage styles are delivered with cutting-edge technology. Developed to screen out Australia's intense UV rays, AM Eyewear's products source high-performance components from around the world. Lenses are made from highly scratch-resistant APX nylon - the material used in military helmet visors and fighter-jet shields. Italian sourced Acetate frames are hand-molded, while the sunglasses' spring-loaded hinges are reinforced to perform at optimum strength.

This spring saw the UK launch of AM Eyewear. Fashion-forward stockists including Browns Focus, Austique, Microzine and Diverse are helping spread the gospel according to AM Eyewear. The message: the eyes are the windows to the soul, so make sure they've got a decent set of curtains...

www.ameyewear.com
www.myspace.com/djmosus

threads

Wiley

words: Chris G

Grime's Big Dada

Time is one thing that Wiley doesn't have a lot of. However, with his new album having just hit the shelves and with the rumour mill rife with talk of retirement, ATM managed to grab a few words with the Godfather of Grime whilst he was out shopping for "lemons".

Wiley has been the Grime scene's leading figure since the very beginning and is now working harder than ever to prove why. At the age of 28, he is still at the very top of the game; in the last year alone he has put out five mix CDs (Tunnel Vision Volumes 1 to 5), as well as most recently, his much-hyped new album, 'Playtime Is Over'. He has clocked up well over one hundred tracks in the process. This is a truly staggering work rate for any musician, but is made even more impressive by the fact that Wiley has not only laid down the vocals for this number of tracks, but has produced the vast majority of them as well. It certainly can't be said that he is afraid of putting the work in.

His hard work has paid dividends, however, resulting most noticeably in his signing to Big Dada – Ninja Tune's street subsidiary - the label that brought commercial success to Roots Manuva. Big Dada has a fiercely independent attitude and allows its artists the freedom to express themselves without the constraints of major label politics. Wiley seems very content with this situation and sounds genuinely happy when he tells us that he is, "in a nice place, a nice comfortable place." He has used this creative freedom to deliver the album that he has always wanted to make; a concise, yet free vision of the sound that he played such an integral role in developing. "It's a progression of my music basically from the stuff I've done on the other albums. I listen back to them [the tracks] and I see where I could have changed my style. It's just a case of improve and improve really."

Never one to shy away from confrontation, Wiley's decision to release his album on the same day as Dizzee Rascal's chart-busting album, 'Maths And English', was bound to raise a few eyebrows. Wiley kicks into business mode when explaining the reasoning behind the decision. "If his one comes out that day, it doesn't matter if he sells more than me or whatever. As much as people buy his on that day, they'll see his and if they see mine they'll take it on, do you know what I mean? They'll look at it and think, 'ah shit, both of them!'"

So why then, when his position as Grime's top dog has never been stronger, has he apparently announced his retirement? "That was a retirement from the Grime scene. I want to be free and just do music. I feel like I'm at the top of my genre. I'm just doing music for myself now and not for the rat race." This move to try and distance himself from Grime's constant beefs and rivalries (of which Wiley has had many) is due, at least in part, to the birth of his daughter, who Wiley devotes a whole track to on his album (Baby Girl). It is not just his daughter that Wiley is playing a father figure to, however.

Having recognised the potential of many of Grime's younger talents, Wiley is keen to help them raise the bar further. Currently championing 16-year-old, Bow-based, MC Ice Kid and 17-year-old producer, Maniac, who produced the album's lead single, 'Bow E3', Wiley has taken them both under his wing and is dubbing them the Eskibeat Youngers. He is also keen to support one of his former rivals, 20-year-old, Movement MC, Scorcher, who he also tips for big things. Wiley firmly believes that the younger generation has the hunger and the talent needed to push things forward and that the Grime scene is still continuing to grow, both in size and quality. "It's getting itself together init? It takes time though; it just needs the people in the scene to keep pushing and pushing."

If the responsibility of pushing Grime forward now rests on the shoulders of the next generation, then what does the future hold for Wiley? "My main aim is to concentrate on production; still spit, but just not put all my eggs in one basket - try and do different stuff. Now that I've come out of the scene and I'm just doing music for myself, it's easier for me to do stuff for everyone, so there's gonna be more productions coming from me over the next three years. Rather than just my own albums, I'll be putting other people's albums together as well."

It remains to be seen whether or not Wiley's retirement will last the course. It seems unlikely that the man who has built his career on clashes and feuds will hand over Grime's crown unattested. One thing is for sure though, even if Wiley does end up staying behind the scenes, in one way or another he'll still rep his ends to the fullest.

Wiley's 'Playtime Is Over' is out now on Big Dada.

words: Ben Wilmott

EZ rollers

Keeping It Rolling

For those of us of a certain age, the intro to the new EZ Rollers album will instantly transport us back to Saturday teatime sometime in the early '80s. On the TV, a rotund wrestler with white hair called Big Daddy is whipping up a crowd of rabid grannies and usually straight laced accountants to a violent frenzy. Loud and clear they're chanting his immortal catchphrase, "Easy! Easy! Easy!" Then, another snapshot from way back in the day - a little before this writer's time, if truth be told - begins to break into the sonic spectrum. The sound of a thousand tartan mini-skirted females chanting, "We want the Rollers! We want the Rollers!", borrowed from a documentary about bubblegum '70s pop legends, The Bay City Rollers. Whereas their multi-million selling career ended after six years, with much of the cash made allegedly never reaching the people who wrote and recorded the songs, the East Anglian duo, EZ Rollers, after 13 odd years of making some of the most influential records in drum and bass, are still together and never been more in control of their business.

There is a down side to that too, however. "Tomorrow's my first day off for six months," confesses the Rollers' Alex Banks, "I was going hell for leather and it was getting a bit stupid." So, how is he intending to spend this hard fought-for freedom? "Er, I'm driving around the country returning all the bits of equipment I've borrowed!" Based some 20 miles outside Norwich, Alex and partner Jay run every aspect of their Intercom label, from writing and producing the tunes, to liaising with distributors and promoting their releases. "It's good because you can't say something didn't work because this or that didn't happen," admits Alex, "it's all down to you."

'Conductor' is the band's fourth album in total, but the first they've released themselves through Intercom. Arguably too, it's the one that best displays the wide variety of sounds they're capable of. It's what you'd expect from a band known to track down authentic '60s equipment through their local contacts to get the sound of a track just right – as they point out, that's something you could never do with all the plug ins in the world - or the band which takes time out from making D&B to produce fellow East Anglians the Arcadian Collective - a collection of folk musicians – although, as Alex is quick to establish, "it ain't any of that sea shanty bollocks!"

Their trademark style of big, explosively musical female vocal anthems that they've been closely associated with in the past - like the Top 20 hit 'Walk This Land' and 'Tough At The Top' - is still very much in evidence on the new LP, and the likes of 'Happy Now' and 'Carousel' look likely to join their older counterparts as Rollers favourites.

At the same time, their hard-edged breakthrough single 'Crowd Rocker', which surprised many with its gnarly, direct approach and hard driven hip-hop hook, is here too. However, there's also 'Go Go Electro', which namechecks old skool names like Afrika Bambaattaa, Kraftwerk and Man Parrish, bringing the vintage electro sound up-to-date by re-routing its piercing synths and cowbell-heavy drum machine beats through D&B. A nod back, Alex says, to his breakdancing teenage years spent happily "sliding around on a lino."

Nor is it restricted purely to the 170-180bpm playground of drum and bass. There's the hip-hop speed tune 'Revolutionize' that sees Messy MC and Kelly Richards, aka the Lady Roller, trading lines over a marching beat, that brings DJ Shadow's 'Lost and Found' to mind. Then, to finish off, Tali of Bristol's Full Cycle crew puts in an appearance on the very last track on the album, a downbeat joint called 'Slowfire',which gives her vocals full space to soar majestically.

"She came up to our studio to do it and she was amazing," says Jay Hurren of the session, "we got her for four and a half hours, and in that time she did the track we'd written and then vibed another couple of tracks before getting the last train home! We're working on the other stuff she gave us at the moment, actually. We could have got her to send a CD, but it's so much nicer if people come to the studio because we have a real laugh with them. Plus, we're 20 miles out of Norwich so we don't get to see many people!"

Jay says they've learnt a lot from the previous three LPs and reckons 'Power Up' is definitely their most diverse offering to date. But for him, the more varied selection is more a matter of evolution than deliberate revolution. "I call the EZ Rollers sound 'the relentless pursuit of the unexpected', he says, "but let's face it, after 13 years making tunes, it'd be pretty weird if we just did the same thing over and over again!"

With Jay now handling the duo's DJ work - "my triangle solo just didn't come up to scratch for the live band", he jokes - it's been down to Alex to put together the live EZ Rollers experience. For years they've been trying to enhance the DJ experience and take it beyond the usual selection of exclusives and big tunes, first by using MC Jakes and adding sounds and samples via a laptop, then by letting Kelly add her own vocals over instrumentals. "Ram stuff was really big at the time - I remember the vocals she came up with for 'Turbulence' by Moving Fusion were amazing," recalls Alex, "we played that tune for about a year after it came out because what she did over it was so good!"

However, the move to a full live set is something Alex is immensely proud of, and after three gigs in Bristol, Minsk in Austria and Budapest in Hungary, he's convinced that all that time and sweat has been worthwhile. Accompanied by Kelly and Messy MC sharing vocals up front, backed by drummer Toby Cooling, bass and guitar player Ed Raison and keyboard wizard Chris Cooper, Alex handles samples and live mixing. "I can mix everything on stage, which is great because we can play places that aren't even set up for live PAs," he says, "and it also means I can do things like put the whole track through a filter; do some real drum and bass tricks."

That's something essential to Alex's vision of what the Rollers should do. "I'm very keen that it's all hardware and there are absolutely no computers involved," he says, "but it's very important that it still sounds like drum and bass. Some people have gone for a more live sound, which is fine for what it is, but it's not the same. You can do the big fat subs, but the drums are a different matter, and, for me, it's all about the moment when the bass and drums lock. I want it to sound like the record."

At the same time, the Rollers live experience is designed to reach out to those who don't know drum and bass - yet. While there'll always be a place for DJs who play the most upfront dubplates, as Alex points out, "not everyone is up by the decks with their notebook out!"

"Most of the people in the clubs are just out to have a good time," he continues, "they're there to have a drink and a dance and flirt with a member of the opposite sex. It can be easy to forget that when you're right in the middle of the music and you know what's going on."

As a result, along with highlights from 'Conductor', the Rollers live set contains renditions of older favourites like 'Walk This Land' and 'Tough At The Top'. "It wouldn't be a Rollers set without them!" insists Alex. They're even considering a James Brown cover version, although that hasn't made the set yet, and Alex is keeping its identity under wraps for now. "I've seen Brown perform it at three different tempos," he says, "it'd be interesting to see if it'd work at drum and bass speed."

"It's the way forward for D&B", says Alex. As well as bands like Pendulum switching over to doing live sets in conjunction with their more traditional DJ activities, he says he's been much encouraged by the generation of new bands playing live D&B. Although not everyone in every electronic genre comes up to scratch, he admits, "I like to keep an eye on what other people are doing," he says, "and I went to something recently where it said there was a live techno set going on in one of the other rooms. I checked it out and it was just two guys staring into their laptops! I just don't think you can get away with that anymore. To most people it's about who's upfront, the vocalists, and whether they look good on stage."

Alex points to one of the recent gigs where there was a power failure, and, once the electricity was up, he realised it would take two minutes for the samples to reload. "I told Messy MC he had two minutes to fill on his own and he was like 'how am I going to do that?'," he relates, "but he started off doing something, the bass player joined in with something else and they came up with something really good right there on the spot. We got a tape of it and we were so impressed we're thinking of doing it as a free download."

That same spirit of live jamming has even made its way back into the Rollers' studio sound, with tracks like 'Happy Now' and others on the album being built up by the duo on samplers and then added to and reshaped by the live musicians. The band have even started to pen a few tracks themselves. "The band has thrown us a bit of a curveball," laughs Alex, "something they came up with that's quite a weird idea. It's either going to be really cheesy or total genius. I think it's a bit of a challenge!"

A challenge that Jay and Alex are certainly up to tackling, if 'Conductor' is anything to go by. Even if it means there are going to be even less days off for them in the next six months. No rest, as they say, for the wicked, and this lot are definitely more wicked than most.

'Conductor' is out now through Intercom.

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words: Mark O'Donnell pix: Leon Csernohlavek

commix
Their Time Has Come

Guy Brewer and George Levings are two likely lads from Cambridge, who are on the verge of making history, by becoming the first production team to release their own LP on Goldie's Metalheadz - apart from the boss man. When there's a whiff of history-making going on in D&B, you can guarantee ATM will be there to tell the story, long before the rest of the world catches up. This is the first time Commix have graced the front cover, and this is the first interview with Commix on what is undoubtedly one of 2007's most important releases, so remember where you heard it first!

2007 is the year that the worlds of techno and drum and bass gravitated closer. There's always been a link; from the days when Goldie bastardised Belgian techno for his early Rufige Kru tracks; to the mid '90s where a D&B remix of a techno 12 was standard procedure. In recent years the link seems to have been less prominent, although artists like Klute have long championed the causes of both genres and Marcus Intalex & ST Files have paid tribute to Detroit with tracks like 'Dreamworld' and 'Memory Jog'. MIST recently went one step further by releasing remixes from John Tejada and Underground Resistance on their DAT Music label. It's an indication of the ghettoisation of dance genres that releasing a techno remix on a D&B label is seen as a brave move, rather than one that makes perfect sense. Commix are very much key figures in this full-blooded embrace with techno, it's a huge influence on their work and they even produce 4/4 music, with some set to feature on their debut LP. George explains: "We really want to get into producing 4/4, proper techno tells a story; it's quite cinematic."

Metalheadz label boss Chris is on hand to confirm that techno don, Claude Von Stroke, will be remixing the duo's 'Belle View' track, as Goldie bumped into him, in of all places, Shanghai. 'Belle View' has got the hearts pounding and the heads nodding of those pushing a groove-based machine-funk manifesto. Rising talent, Lynx, is a big fan as are a host of others. "A lot of people are doing the Detroit techno thing but I would say that (Belle View) is more influenced by the new school techno, glitch, of James Holden or Matthew Johnson," says a composed Guy. "I think it's good when people's influences aren't coming from one scene," he continues, "that's when it starts to stagnate. The thing that excited people about drum and bass in the first place was that you could hear soul, reggae, techno all in one track, with a completely different structure to what you'd heard before. It's what still attracts us to it."

We're sat on big, puffy, leather couches on the first floor of the Herbal club, Shoreditch. Nightclubs don't make sense during the day; the sun is streaming in the windows, there's a lingering smell of cleaning agents and an overwhelming sensation that the fixtures and fittings are just waiting to come alive when it gets dark. This is somewhere the guys are, "very familiar with, we come here quite often for the Hospitality nights and of course the Metalheadz nights," George points out. Guy looks around as if trying to reacquaint himself with the curves. "We've definitely had some messy nights here, particularly in this room at 5am, falling all over the place."

Turn the clocks back a couple of hours and we're on the streets of East London in search of locations for the shoot. Guy and George are keen to avoid the same old D&B mug shots, where the standard facial expression is somewhere on the serious side of moody, they're more concerned by finding somewhere with "flowers" and "colour" - maybe even finding the time to roll a cheeky one - and being shot with some animation rather than just giving it a 1000 yard stare. It's all quite refreshing to hear but the heat is pounding down. One minute we're reaping the benefits of exotic sunshine in the most unexotic Shoreditch, and then we're all stuck nose-to-pit on the underground, which is about as bad an advert for the tube as you can imagine.

Let's backtrack a little and find out how two good-natured fellas from Cambridge, convinced Goldie and the Metalheadz camp they had what it takes to produce an album that will do justice to the labels proud history.

Guy & George grew up in Cambridge, a place renowned for its elite University and relaxing pace of life. It's somewhere they are evidently very fond of and are more than happy during the course of the day to recount happy times "punting" down stream, during the long and hazy summers. For a place like Cambridge to have produced the talents of not only Commix but Nu Tone and Logistics is quite remarkable and bears similarities to the Cornwall electronica boom of the '90s that saw Aphex Twin, Luke Vibert and Tom Middleton emerge from the area. Dan (Nu Tone) can be found in this very issue and is someone Commix have a lot of respect for. "Dan was teaching at a local college and made some tunes in Durham with John B, when he came back, we used to sit and watch him and that was the best way to learn, it also fired us up a bit," reckons George. "And we all knew Matt (Logistics) from friends at school," picks up Guy, "George has known Matt from when he was 6 or something. Because we were all into drum and bass, we used to sit there play computer games, listen to tunes and get stoned."

So straight out of…Cambridge, they all had their own individual successes. Nu Tone with his releases on Hospital and Logistics, who, originally struck gold with the club anthem 'Together', Commix were a little slower to grab the headlines as Guy readily describes, "We'd never had a home (at that point). Nu Tone had big tunes, Logistics blew up, but we always saw ourselves as the underdogs, from our little camp, we were in the background a bit, rather than having one home we spread ourselves too thinly I think. There came a point when we had to decide whether to really give it a go or to get proper day jobs and luckily we decided to give it a go." The first time they really made their mark was on the Future Sound Of Cambridge EP on Hospital Records. In what was a bold and adventurous move from the Hospital camp, the – at the time - relatively unknown Commix featured in the shape of the tribal heat-seeker 'Roots Train'. While this track hardly achieved widespread acclaim, it showed that they had the potential to achieve bigger things in the future.

After 'Roots Train', Goldie first got in touch, and the original third member of Commix, Conrad, left to pursue other things. This left them hungry to pursue more of varied approach, rather than the soulful output that typified their earlier work. "We decided we wanted to make something much more personal to us and that's when we started making deeper music I suppose," explains Guy.

Their big break came in the shape of a golden handshake from none other than Bryan G, when he requested they remix DJ Die's classic 'Autumn', to kick-start the Liquid V label. George is quick to acknowledge what a pivotal moment this was. "The first person to give us our first major break was Bryan G. It definitely made us step up our game."

Not that subsequent success happened overnight, even though tracks like the '5 Reasons' remix on Brand Nu managed to add more members to the Commix fan club. While Goldie heaped praise on the duo from early on, it was the offer of a Metalheadz album deal that really shocked some outsiders, many of whom believed Kryptic Minds & Leon Switch had been given the nod for an LP deal. It signalled a change of direction for the label and it was a daunting prospect for Commix. "To be offered to do a 12 and then an album was such a compliment and I was like no fucking way! From what I'd heard from Goldie and the label over the years we thought there's no way we can match that," retells a down-to-earth Guy.

The visionary zeal for their work from Goldie was rewarded when they came up, with a big crossover tune, the deep and deadly sub-monster, 'Talk To Frank'. Sounding unlike anything else around at the time, this track has already widely been touted as a trailblazer that inspired many producers to follow the leaders. Metalheadz Chris concurs. "It definitely sounded different when I first heard it." Such was the success of the tune it got re-mastered and re-issued last year, which created a huge waiting list of

Their Time Commix Has Come

punters clamouring to get a piece of the action. The re-issued flip 'Electric' also kicked up a real fuss amongst the ravier end of the spectrum with its no-nonsense electro-boogie stomp.

Back to the future. The forthcoming album entitled 'Call To Mind' is due out in September with the sampler 'Be True' due in July. Now 'Be True' has all the hallmarks of being a timeless classic, in the true sense of the word, and it's a track that can hold its own on a label that's produced more classics than most. From the word go, the intro conjures up visions of suspense that would make Alfred Hitchcock proud. In a flash the bassline takes you back to 1995 and the sound of Moving Shadow, comparisons with the undeniable 'Soul Promenade', should put you in the picture. This is Commix in full flow, making D&B that stirs the soul and still rocks the floor. In a word: beautiful. "That's probably the best thing we've ever written," concedes Guy. George continues: "The album is a collection of a long time of work. I think it's got the right elements; dance floor appeal but musical elements."

And so onto another highlight: 'How You Gonna Feel', featuring the sublime vocal talent of D Bridge's brother Steve Spacek. Apparently it was just an instrumental track to start off with. "We'd been working on it a long time," says George, "when we got the vocal back from Steve, we heard it once and we couldn't picture the tune without it." Indeed in the space of six and a half minutes Spacek manages to majestically confirm his position as one of the most outstanding voices working in D&B today. The vibe is futuristic soul and this isn't something lost on Commix. "A lot of tracks on the album pay homage to music that we're into and that one is new skool soul: the Philly sound, people like Jill Scott, J Dilla, Wajeed and Platinum Pied Pipers." Never has the sound been reincarnated to such effect in D&B terms. Let's hope there's more of this to come.

With tracks like this year's 'Talk To Frank' coming in the form of 'Strictly', the album is likely to take some beating when it comes to the traditional end of year posturing about who produced the outstanding longplayer. In a year when LP's have come thick and fast and there's some real quality around from Calyx & TeeBee, High Contrast and Klute, if Commix can trump the lot, their time will finally have come. "It's consistent and varied which is important to us," says Guy. George continues: "It's a stressful thing in a way to put together 12 tracks that tell a story for an album. We've been really careful not to put anything on there that we're not entirely happy with," before Guy adds, "We've grown up with albums from back in the day that we respected, they had different tempos running through, and we've got a few downtempo things that break the album up."

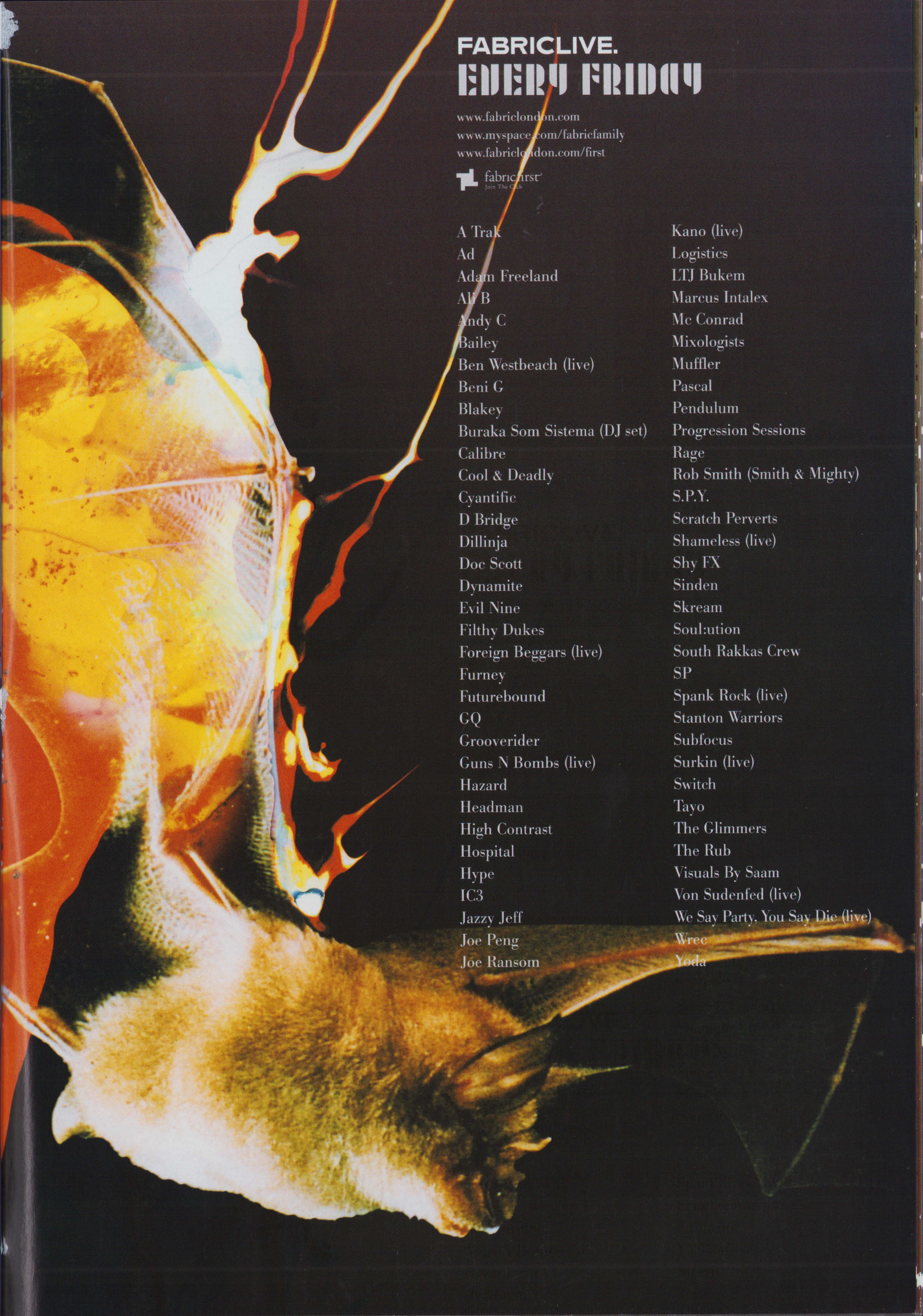
The bubbly, Jo Hines, Herbal's promotions manager, pops into to say hello and make sure everything is running smoothly. After a chat with Guy and George about which month would be best for them to play at the Metalheadz monthly, and how she's never braved the rooftop terrace we scaled for the front cover shot, Jo leaves us to get back on track with the interview.

"The album is all about reminiscence and memories," picks up Guy, "a lot of things on the album are things we've always wanted to do but never got round to, like the thing with the Nextmen – a drum and bass track with chopped up hip-hop samples." Once again it transpires that there's a Cambridge connection. "They used to live round the corner from where our studio is now," George explains. We're keeping it Cambridge. Ha-Ha," laughs Guy.

A familiar sound swirls around the room in the form of Guy's ringtone, it's the intro of LTJ Bukem's 'Atlantis' and I immediately want it! A couple more cigs and beers later and we're talking artwork. If you've seen the gatefold sleeve to Goldie's recent 'Malice In Wonderland' album, you'll know Headz is a label that recognises the importance of design. Commix identified the person they wanted for their album and have got him on board: "We saw John Stark's artwork and were really excited by it." Talking to Commix it's obvious they want to try and stretch the envelope rather than just being content with working within familiar generic parameters. "We like anything that is future thinking, strong different concepts, anything with an emotion you know, that doesn't sound too lazy," says George. Not that they are going to start dropping some chin-strokingly, abstract, and impenetrable drum and bass anytime soon. "There are lots of people playing left of centre avante garde stuff, but we always wanted our stuff to be played in clubs."

Before we all go our separate ways it becomes clear that like all good double-acts, even though they come across as quite similar on the surface, with their curly locks, laid back demeanours and sunny outlooks, there's quite a fundamental difference in their characters. "I just stay at home," Guy explains when questioned on his partying. "George goes out more. I guess we're different people; I like my home comforts and my cup of cocoa before I go to bed and George likes going out. Like all of the best duo's, you can't have two people the same, it just wouldn't work."

The 'Be True' sampler is out in July and 'Call To Mind' will be out in September 2007. ATM would like to thank all the team at Herbal for their hospitality and help with this feature.



slammin vinyl

Rave On!

words: Lee Henaghan pics: Paul Underhill

After a decade in the game and with scores of highly successful, large scale events under their belts, the Slammin Vinyl crew are entering one of the most exciting times in their history. From relatively humble beginnings, Slammin promoters, Michael and Grant, have seen their events rapidly expand in size and scope. From the grimey Bagley's backrooms of the mid-nineties, to the sorely missed Sanctuary, the common theme with Slammin Vinyl events has always been big line-ups attracting big crowds.

This commitment to quality and progression has earned them a fiercely loyal following, allowing the team to be a little more ambitious than your average promoter. After successfully filling out arenas like the NEC, these ambitions soon stretched beyond indoor venues altogether and has led to Slammin planning an unprecedented two-day festival of underground dance music this summer.

The Sanctuary Festival represents a giant leap forwards for both Slammin and the scene in general. In addition to the obligatory marquees, a fully outdoor main stage will form the centerpiece of the festival and onsite camping facilities mean that Sanctuary will be the biggest rave ever staged by an underground promoter. Slammin Vinyl's Michael feels that the timing is perfect for such a bold step.

"It's something we've wanted to do for years. We feel we've served our apprenticeship by consistently staging some of the largest indoor dance music events this country has seen this century, so it's high time we took this experience and knowledge and put it into an outdoor format" he says. "We really felt we wanted to go for a full-on, all weekend festival event rather than just a daytime or one night thing; this is something new and something the scene deserves".

Events on this scale clearly do not happen overnight, however, and Sanctuary is the result of years of planning and preparation. "We were planning some other events a few years back, but they never came off, which was probably a good thing. An outdoor event takes a huge amount of experience, planning, and also balls to put on. You can't just come out of nowhere and think you can do one of these events if all you've ever done is a couple of nightclubs."

Thankfully, Slammin are perfectly placed to handle something on this scale and comparisons are already being drawn, not only with the likes of Global Gathering, but with Helter Skelter's legendary Energy 97 rave, which has gone on to attain Woodstock-esque status amongst the drum and bass community. Michael agrees: "It's the first time in ten years that somebody has put an outdoor event on where 'our music' headlines the show." he says. "In this country we already have two world class dance music festivals in Creamfields and Global Gathering, but drum and bass is not really integral to what they are doing. We feel we are best qualified to take what we have been doing indoors for years into an outdoor environment and give our crowd their own festival, instead of having to settle for something which doesn't represent them."

Choosing the perfect setting for Sanctuary was always going to be integral to the event's success and it seems that, in the Matterley Bowl, Michael feels they may have found the ideal festival site. "Matterley is undoubtedly a proven venue, as Homelands did very well there for several years and the local residents are well aware of these type of events. It's also midway between London and the West Country, two of our most important areas, and it's near to Bournemouth, where we've sold out the Opera House on a number of occasions. It's an absolutely superb setting for a festival, genuinely beautiful, not some crappy inner city playing field surrounded by tower blocks!"

It is the Matterley site itself that Michael hopes will help overcome another factor that is fast becoming the curse of the drum and bass festival-goer. Over-zealous Health and Safety officials monitoring excessive bass levels at some events has often led to D&B tents operating under crippling restrictions. Slammin are wary of their presence, but feel that the bowl-like nature of the site will mean that the Sanctuary sounds will be maintained at proper levels throughout. "They cause us major problems, even on the indoor events. Unfortunately this country is becoming obsessed with Health and Safety issues, so every year putting on events like these is becoming ever more difficult." he says. "The great thing about Matterley is the fact that it's a natural bowl, which helps to trap sound well away from any residents, so we can crank it up to a really good level throughout the day and night, unlike a lot of events in urban areas."

One thing that sets the Sanctuary festival apart from anything that has gone before it is the inclusion of a fully outdoor open-air stage. Tents and marquees are pretty much par for the course at these events, but the Slammin team clearly felt that an outdoor stage was a necessity if they were going to achieve that genuine festival feel. "The open-air stage will feature some of the main guys from the three music genres with which we are most associated; drum and bass, hardcore and hard dance". Not that this is a one off experiment, however, "We did it on a much smaller scale at the Sanctuary & Rollers warehouse venue in Milton Keynes in 2004. We constructed an outdoor stage which ran from 3pm to 11pm and it just absolutely went off. The atmosphere was unreal; there was just this buzz about the whole place all day. That's what we're planning to recapture and replicate in a massive way at Sanctuary Festival. If you look at footage from any of the festivals, it's always the main stage that's the centrepiece so we're really going to make sure ours does the festival, the artists, and above all, the music justice."

If Sanctuary is to be truly recognised as the UK's underground music festival, then the chances are it will have to contend with every festival's rites of passage; the dreaded washout. The 'Great British Summer' is unpredictable, at the best of times, and torrential downpours have seen previously lush, green fields transformed into a sea of mud. Michael is confident that it will take far more than a bit of rain to dampen the spirits of the Slammin crowd though. "We are well prepared for this sort of thing, despite imminent Global Warming! Some of the biggest festivals in the UK, such as Glastonbury and Global Gathering, have had some horrendous weather in the past, but it hasn't hurt them. Since the Hi-Fi event was wet there last year, the site owners have put in extra drainage to minimise any disruption, should it be wet there in the future. We're also putting the campsite at the higher end of the site, so water won't stand in that area." he says. "We are, of course, hoping for fine weather, which we should get because it is traditionally one of the driest times of the year, but we know that the ravers are made of sterner stuff and won't let a drop of rain put them off."

Volatile weather conditions aside, the Sanctuary festival is already shaping up to be a huge success and Michael is hopeful that if it gets the expected level of support, Slammin will look to establish the event as the UK's premier annual underground music festival. "It's high time that the more underground side of the dance music scene has its very own festival. On top of that, so many man hours and so much effort has been put into establishing this first one, that we can't let the groundwork go to waste in the future. With our events at the NEC, Alexandra Palace, The Royal Bath & West and Brixton Academy, we've got a portfolio of very prestigious venues that's unrivalled in the 'underground' scene. We're looking to add the Matterley Bowl and the name Sanctuary Festival to that list."

It is this increasingly lengthy list of packed raves and extraordinary events that have led to Slammin becoming recognised as one of, if not the biggest, promoters on the scene. Many outsiders would be forgiven for assuming that this industry-leading position would mean that Grant and Michael would be enjoying the glamorous jet-set lifestyle, but it's clear that the Slammin team are happy to take a back seat away from all the limelight. "We're very much behind-the-scenes people here. There's not much glamour at all in what we do - we organise, we run the event all night, we go home in the morning, then we do it all again next time," he says. "The artists get all the acclaim, and rightly so. We get a lot of satisfaction from what we do professionally and we draw a lot of personal pride from that."

Establishing yourself at the pinnacle of any industry can often cause rivals to look to underhand tactics as they attempt to muscle in on the market, but in their ten year history it seems Slammin have kept things running smoothly without causing any major friction amongst their competitors. "There's healthy competition, of course, just as you'd find between any companies operating in the same sector. You take on board what happens around you in the scene and you may adapt or revise an aspect of a strategy accordingly. But generally, each promoter knows what the others are doing and where, so we all just tend to get on with our own thing rather than worrying too much about someone else."

Of course, 'getting on with your own thing' means one thing for Slammin Vinyl: putting on huge raves, and that's exactly what they've got planned for the rest of 2007 and beyond. It's the usual schedule of big line-ups, big production and big crowds that should keep the faithful occupied well after the Sanctuary festival has died down. "We've got two 10,000+ people events at Westfest on October 27th, always one of our favourites. On top of that, we're going back to the NEC for New Year's Eve. In between, we also have One Nation at the Brixton Academy on the August Bank Holiday Sunday, which always sells out, and a One Nation at the Bristol Academy on December 8th."

No rest for the wicked there then and it's clear that the future is looking extremely bright for all at Slammin Vinyl. In a genre such as drum and bass, which was forged and founded by promoters who regularly pushed the boundaries of what could and couldn't be done at all night raves, it's vital that we have a forward-thinking organisation that is willing to take the kind of risks involved in putting on a two day outdoor festival. As Michael says, the scene deserves it.

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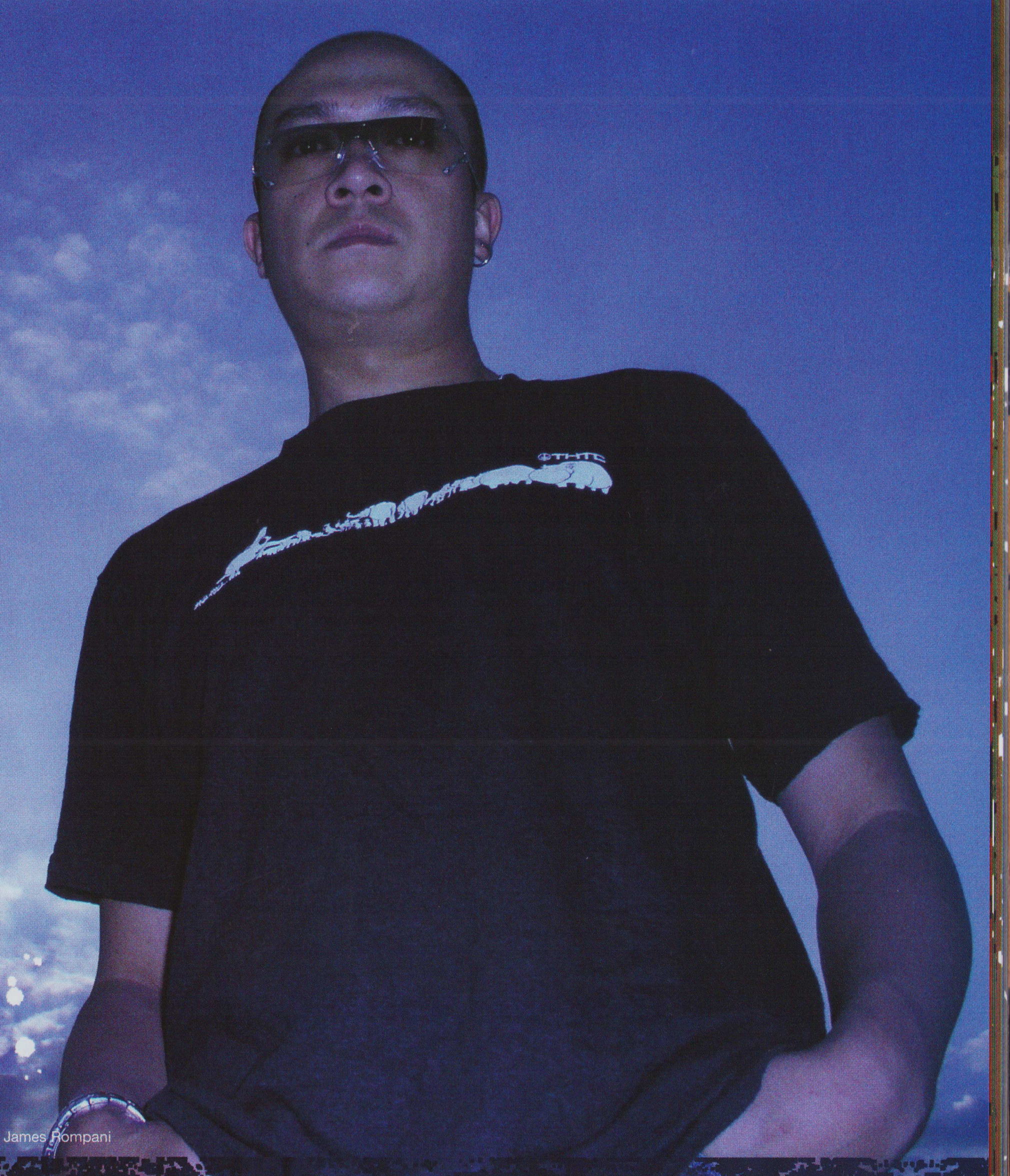


nookie

Soul Provider

words: James Rompani

With over seventeen years producing and DJing experience, Nookie has played an integral role within drum and bass music since the beginning. Having started off mixing hip-hop and ragga, he has seen drum and bass evolve out of the early rave and hardcore scene into what it is today. Involved with the Reinforced Records and Moving Shadow labels back in the day, he produced groundbreaking records such as 'Shining In Da Darkness' and 'A Drum, A Bass, & A Piano'. He subsequently spent the last five years signed to Good Looking Records and he's now taking things into his own hands with the creation of his new label, Phuzion records and his Strictly-Digital download store. With his fifth album hitting the shops we thought it was only right to see what he had to say.

"I started my own label years and years ago called Daddy Armshouse. I stopped that as it was too much like hard work and wanted to concentrate on making music. Now I want to get the label back up and running, not just for me, but for the whole host of talent out there. And not just talent from this country, a lot of the international kids are showing us Brits how to do it properly, which is good as it keeps us on our toes."

Providing the next generation with a selection of fine beats, Nookie's music takes you on a journey. Having experienced the evolution of the music with his own eyes and ears, we asked him how he had seen it change over the years? "The technology side has a big part to play, especially with drum and bass. Years ago, when the time stretching thing came in, it changed things notably and, now newer technology has changed the music for the better, people are clearly thinking more about production these days; there are proper harmonies and all that going on now. It's good to see, but my message to new artists would be not to get too carried away with the technology as it doesn't have any soul. Don't place too much emphasis on it. Drum and bass has been here for a long time and a part of that is because of the quality control put in place by those involved with it."

With thought, insight and musical clarity, his latest album offers a mature rendition of what this man is capable of when it comes to making music. There is a definite deeper side to Nookie, which is clearly expressed and translated through listening to the music he makes; he seems to follow a code of ethics - a code that has obviously treated him well as he is still here today doing his thing - from the THTC garments that he wears, right down to the creation of the beats he makes. He also understands the importance of nurturing new talent through the ranks, giving more reason to why he is now concentrating on his own label, which involves talent from a wide range of up-and-coming cats from both the UK and further a field.

"Personally, I don't think about being a front man when it comes to my music career. Life, to me, is more about relationships in terms of your family and friends. The music business is the worst business to be in with so many sharks and back-stabbers. I've seen people just switch from one face to another. That's why I keep my feet on the ground and just enjoy what I do. I don't make music for the pound signs, I make music for the heart. It's like the old motto, 'do you live to work or do you work to live?'"

With a list of aka's longer than your average dole queue – including his formidable Cloud 9 moniker - it's safe to say that Nookie has gained great experience working with many different genres of music. Over the year's he has managed to keep himself behind the scenes, whilst at the same time managing to keep his head above the water. Clearly a very down-to-earth and collected character, Nookie explains that music means a lot to him.

"I am quite prolific when it comes to making music. I've always loved making music and I just wanted to make as much as possible, so instead of people getting sick of me under one name I used another alias. This album is just to show people how my music has progressed and matured. I haven't released many tunes over the last few years, mainly because I was locked in with Good Looking records. This album has been in progress for some time now. I didn't want to do it all strictly drum and bass. As a producer, I don't think you should be tied down to making just one type of music, you want to be able to have the creative freedom to do what you want."

Talking about the longevity of music these days and the fact that his album offers a more soul-orientated translation of drum and bass, he talked about how quickly tunes suddenly become old news theses days in the widespread throwaway culture. "The shelf life of music these days depends on a lot of things. If you're making music for the dance floor and for the here and now, the shelf life is very much shorter than music that has more soul melodies and vocals. Those in-your-face tracks only last for a couple of months until the next big tune comes along."

When asked what the power of music is? It was clear that he'd thought about this one before. "Melodies - from melodies comes the hook and from there the soul comes. If music doesn't have any soul then it's shallow and heartless. Music is so personal to every individual it has to be able to go some way in reaching and touching everyone."

Promos for Phuzion Records ten are in the shops. You can get the full details of the new album, remixes and other releases at www.strictly-digital.com, or, if you want the more personal touch, show some love at www.myspace.com/djnookie. Oh, and don't forget you can catch his radio show on Ministry of Sound radio every Monday from 10pm-12am.

leaders of the nu skool

Compiled by: **Danny Shutdown** Illustration by: **Teen (NAT / PTP)**

leaders of the nu skool

In this issue we cover new talent from all over the world of drum and bass. **ASHKIAT** are Singapore-based and have some killer beats forthcoming on the Rufige label, while over in Slovakia rising talent **L PLUS** has been providing some Eastern European flavour on Mickey Finn's 'Urbanism' project, amongst others. Further north, **SOLAR G** is representing the Russian Federation and is one of a wave of new producers from the area. Back in the UK, **CULTURE SHOCK**, is featuring in the sets of many industry heavyweights and is being tipped for big things in the future. The Brighton-based **QEMISTS** are the rave wing of legendary label Ninja Tunes, and with huge support on Radio 1, for their rock-inspired drum and bass, you better keep an eye on these guys. **PAUL T** from south London is set to take centre stage with his beats forthcoming on Phuzion and Inperspective, while **KG** has been making a name for himself on Terrafunk and Easy Records. Last but not least **WOOZ** completes the circle, he's someone who has already been experiencing success as part of the production team, Sigma, but did you know he has previously won DMC team comps and his own productions are to follow on labels as diverse as Rufige, Bingo and Metro/Viper? Read on…

ASHKIAT

Based? Singapore

Biggest tunes so far? 'Last Lullaby', '5-pointer', 'Diablo'. All coming soon to a Rufige EP near you!

How long have you been producing music? 3 Years.

How did you get into music? Kiat: As a kid, my Dad was always listening to '70s funk and soul on his turntable, so the home was always filled with grooves. Later on, I watched Wildstyle and was consumed by hip hop from then on. Ashidiq: Abba did it for me when I was 6. Then there was hip hop.

If you could choose between DJing or production, which would it be and why? It used to be DJing when we were younger but now that we find it hard to stay up past 3am in the morning, it's definitely got to be production…for us, it's like painting, where the palette are your sounds and time is our canvas.

What inspires and influences you? All music that we have come across all our lives inspires us in one way or another. For us it's everything from hip hop, ragga, old school house, electro, etc. But at the end of the day, we always go back to our roots of hip hop!

What tracks would you have most like to have written? Kiat: Al Green – 'Let's Stay Together'. Ashidiq: Bob James – 'Nautilus'

Who is your favourite DJ and why? Kiat: Drum and bass: just too many favourite DJs to mention, depends on my mood really! For house music: Kerri Chandler for his nice heavy basslines with so much soul. For hip hop: Jazzy Jeff and Ash for their slick turntable skills and all round block party vibes. Ashidiq: I guess Fabio and Jazzy Jeff. They were the last DJs I remembered that managed to make me dance even while I was sober.

What event would you most like to play at and why? Winter Music Conference and the 20th Metalheadz anniversary party!

What's the best studio advice you have been given? From Digital: Keep the vibe as your writing and worry about the details of the track later. From Goldie: Have a strong concept to your music, it's all about good ideas, that will make your music last. From Amit: Abuse your mixing desk! Let the natural properties of your desk add personality to the sound.... and when your face scrunches up like Popeye when you play-back that break or bassline you're working on you know you have something worth pursuing!

What's next for you? Back into the studio to make more beats that others would enjoy! And hopefully, get a chance to play around the world!

THE QEMISTS

Based? Sunny Brighton

Biggest tunes so far? The new single 'Stompbox' has had the biggest response from radio and DJs and people in general.

How long have you been producing music? 30 years between all three of us.

How did you get into music? The three of us started playing in various bands when we were quite young. We were all interested in recording, and the production followed on from there.

If you had to choose between DJing or production which would it be and why? Production. DJing a an amazing buzz, and we all love it, but it doesn't beat making tunes or seeing people react to them in a club.

What music inspires or influences you? A lot of different things between us. Anything that's different or original or extreme. It ranges from Jeff Buckley to Limewax, with a lot of things in between!

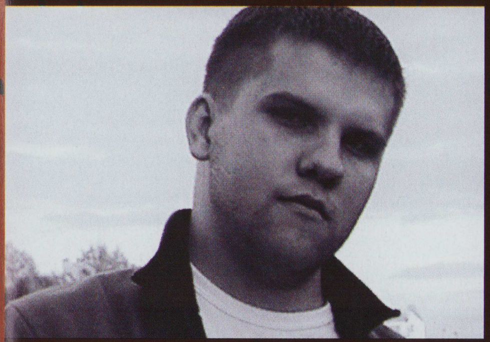
What track would you most like to have written? Rage against the Machine – 'Killing In The Name'.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? So many good DJs these days, if Coldcut, Mampi Swift and Kentaro went back to back, that'd be awesome!

What event would you most like to play at and why? Main Stage at Glastonbury, we've all been going since we were 14, it would be a dream come true.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Make a dunce hat, and anyone who wastes time on a crazy sonic experiment that sounds shit has to wear it until they redeem themselves!

What's next for you? Finishing touches to our album for Ninja that is due out early 2008. Then a holiday.



SOLAR G

Based? Russian Federation, Orel.

Biggest tunes so far? Solar G - 'Loves Sunshine'.

How long have you been producing music? 7 years.

How did you get into music? From 1994 -1999 I studied at music school where I learnt how to play guitar and piano. After I purchased my first PC I started to produce electronic music. It was house music that inspired my interest in breakbeat and drum'n'bass music, which are now my favourite styles.

If you had to choose between DJing or production which would it be and why? Production, because I like to do it more than DJing.

What music inspires or influences you? Jazz, Soul, House, 2 step Garage and Drum'n'Bass.

What track would you most like to have written? Any big tune!

Who's your favourite DJ and why? Marky, because he is very good DJ.

What event would you most like to play at and why? I would like play in London. It is the capital of the worldwide drum and bass scene.

What's next for you? More great tunes and new vinyl releases across the board on as many labels as I can make them for.

leaders of the nu skool

PAUL T

Based? East London, south of the river, Forest Hill.

Biggest tunes so far? Well so far it's been 'Direct Action' signed to Phuzion and just lately a 12 to Inperspective Records, due out in a few months.

How long have you been producing music? It has been well over a 10 year love affair.

How did you get into music? Definitely from going to raves at the beginning of the '90s and being taken to another place with the atmosphere and sounds I was hearing at places like Lazerdrome, Orange, etc.

If you could choose between DJing or production, which would it be and why? To be honest I love writing, it kind of relaxes me sitting there with sounds and beats. Lately, I have been loving DJing too, especially after the Asia tour with MC Lady Free.

What inspires and influences you? I listen to Lonnie Liston Smith, Herbie Hancock, DJ Shadow, Lee Scratch Perry, Brian Wilson, The Bays, the list goes on.

What tracks would you have most like to have written? There are a few I'd like to have written: LTJ Bukem's 'Music' and PFM's 'Cowboy tune'.

Who is your favourite DJ and why? Nookie, because when I've seen him play it has been across the board, something for everyone.

What event would you most like to play at and why? It's got to be Swerve because there you have the license to play whatever you like and what you feel or Glastonbury would be amazing.

What's the best studio advice you have been given? To keep working hard and believe in what you like and write. And enjoy yourself.

What's next for you? I have just started a new night / label with DJ Shine called Revival. Our launch date is 27th July '07 at Gramaphone Bar, E1. Along with myself, we have Lenzman, Pete Rann, TC1 and Stress Level playing. I recently signed a single to Inperspective records and I 'm working on new songs with Chris Inperspective, Deezim, MC Lady Free and Survival. I'm off to Madrid and Slovakia DJing in the following months, so I'm pretty busy.

KG

Based? Gravesend, Kent.

Biggest tunes so far? That would have to be 'Apocalypto' and 'Remain Where You Are' forthcoming on Easy Records. Both tracks have had support and positive feedback from a lot of key players.

How long have you been producing music? I have been producing for about three years.

How did you get into music? I have been brought up listening to music from a very young age watching my mum dancing round the house to records like 'Pump Up The Jam' ha-ha. I got into D&B in the early nineties listening to pirate stations like Kool FM and have been hooked ever since.

If you had to choose between DJing or production which would it be and why? That's a hard decision. I love both, but at the moment I would say production, as that is the area I am focusing on the most. Any spare time I have, I dedicate to producing tunes, and it is a hobby I thoroughly enjoy, now more than ever.

What music inspires or influences you? All music inspires me from classical musical to heavy metal. That's what I love about drum and bass, it's so versatile! You can be inspired and take elements from any music genre and it will be accepted. So I would say music in general inspires and influences me.

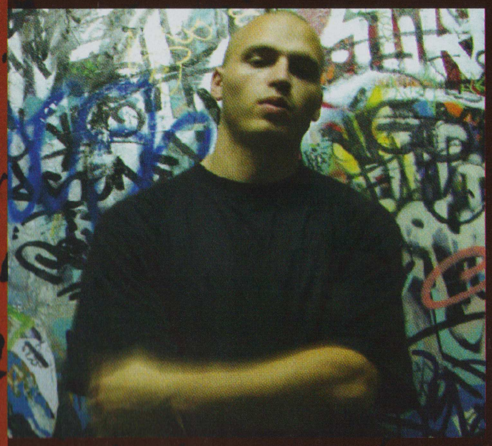
What track would you most like to have written? Choosing one is just too difficult, here are a few: 'Billion Dollar Gravy' by London Elektricity, 'Still Grey' by Pendulum and 'At The Drive In' by Baron. There are so many I could go on for ever!

Who's your favourite DJ and why? I would have to say DJ Hype. He always knows how to get the dance floor moving, he's always evolved with the music and has always stayed at the top of his game.

What event would you most like to play at and why? True Playaz at Fabric; an awesome club, quality sound system and wicked vibes.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? If you're not in the mood for it, don't bother. Also use good quality sounds and samples, and you should be on the way to building a decent tune.

What's next for you? For 2007, so far, I have forthcoming 'Big Muma' on an Urbanism picture disc, 'Apocalypto' / 'Remain Where You Are' coming on Easy Records, 'Stronger And Stronger' on Frequency, 'I Can't Take It' / 'Lucky Number 17' on Advanced, 'Move' remix on Radical Beats, 'Jungle Story' featuring MC Tali on Easy Records and 'Sativa', as well as a few more remixes and collaborations with some established artists in the scene.



DJ WOOZ UK (SIGMA)

Based? It's a long story...

Biggest tunes so far? 'El Presidente' (Bingo Beats), 'Jamrock' bootleg, 'Repeated Groove' Rmx (Mofo).

How long have you been producing music? I've been producing for about 3 to 4 years.

How did you get into music? Got my first pair of decks with my bro' when I was 11 years old, mixing early jungle and hip hop, came 2nd in London DMC aged 16 and got the buzz for DJing, eventually winning the UK DMC team title. The love for DJing recently spawned into a love of production, the rest is history.

If you had to choose between DJing or production which would it be and why? A mixture of both. I love to play fast energetic sets and there's nothing better than seeing a crowd go off to a tune that I've written, or a set that I've played.

What music inspires or influences you? Hip hop, soul, funk, breaks, pretty much anything with a groove and a vibe.

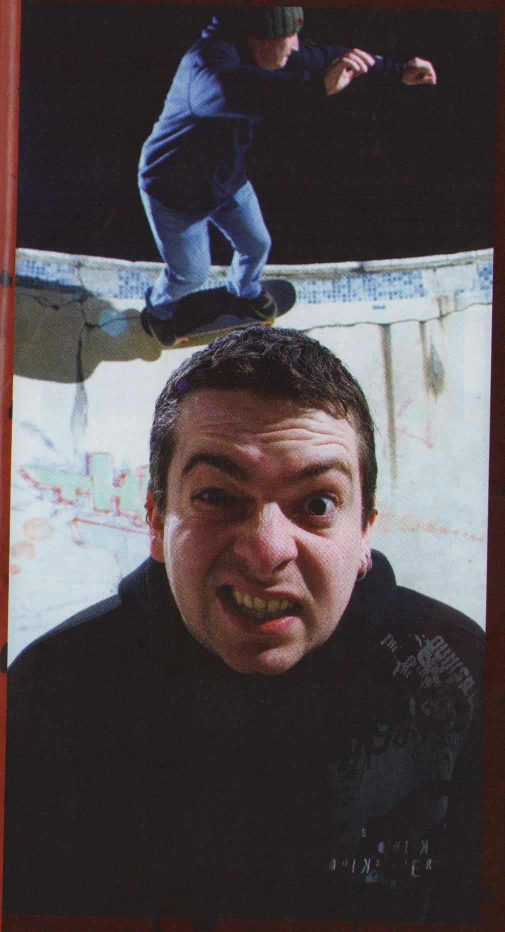
What track would you most like to have written? Massive Attack – 'Unfinished Sympathy'.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? Qbert & Craze – raw unadulterated skills.

What event would you most like to play at and why? Main Stage at Glastonbury.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Cross reference the tunes your working on, preferably with another track that you like the sound of.

What's next for you? I've got tunes forthcoming on Metro/Viper, Bingo Beats, Ruffige (Metalheadz), and Charge recordings.



L PLUS

Based? Bratislava, Slovakia. Some people think it's the middle of nowhere, others that it's the heart of Europe. Choose one. But for better imagination watch the movie Hostel; its based in Bratislava!

Biggest Tunes so far? 'H20' signed for Micky Finn's Urbanism project, which will be coming on a stunning picture disc. Then 'Beton' and 'Yello' both signed to Jeryl from Dogs On Acid / Nu Urban. These tunes are the biggest in my production's bag yet, full of energy and really working on the floor.

How long have you been producing music? I first installed FastTracker2 on my 486 in '98 just for fun. In 2003 I started to really take it seriously, producing all night, sleeping in school. You'd better ask my girlfriend this question! I'm not only making D&B, I've made some pop tunes which were played by radio stations around Czech and Slovakia and I've worked with some famous Slovak jazz musicians.

How did you get into music? I started playing flute when I was 6, I did that for three years and then at 15 I bought my first electric guitar. Me and a few friends had a punk group called The Buffer but we had to quit because the neighbours complained about the noise coming from the basement! Then, when I came to the Architecture Faculty at Bratislava University, I had my first contact with drum and bass. I met two close friends and between us we bought a pair of turntables and started to DJ.

If you had to choose between DJ'ing or Production, which, would it be and why? I had a hard time answering this question! DJing is my first love, I entered a DJ competition and won my own set of Technics 1210 Mk2 turntables and I love spinning vinyl and getting people on the floor. Production is much more creative and satisfies my artistic needs, but without DJing and playing my tunes out it's a dead end for me.

What music inspires or influences you? Hard to say, I go through different periods, sometimes I'm into the '60s, then I'm visiting jazz clubs, sometimes it's cool to listen to Marylyn Manson next to ADF at open air festival. It depends, I think all kinds of music inspire me.

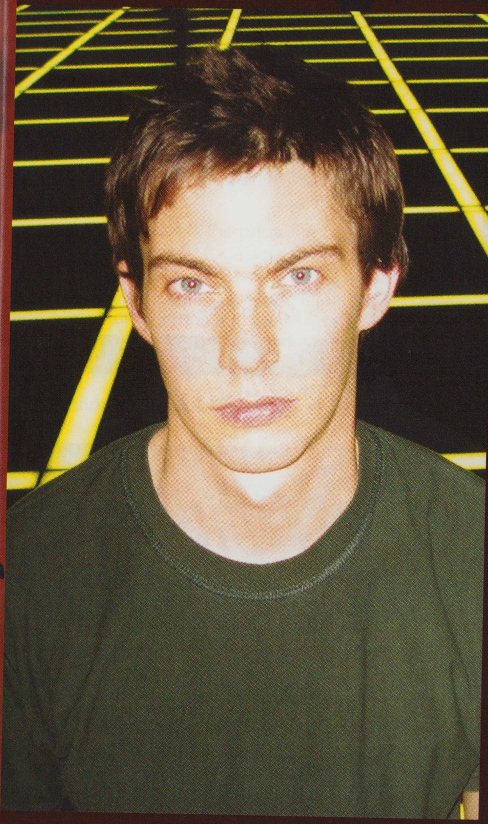
What track would you most like to have written? 'Twist Em Out' or the Nokia theme.

Whats your favourite DJ and why? I really like to listen to Andy C's mixes, and I love Teebee's selections too. When there's another boring day in office, I usually look for mixes of these two on the Internet.

What event would you most like to play at and why? A few days ago Tony from Future Prophecies sent me a movie clip from the Generator stage Moscow, Russia. That's the party I would really like to play! Massive crowd, hands in the air and big, big noise!

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Not to do ragga.

What's next for you? A few weeks ago I was offered an exclusive contract from Nu Urban, so I think I'll have more time and inspiration for production than before. I'm starting to think about some better bookings around Europe and maybe outside. I'm running several collaborations with artist from other countries. I want to push more time into my production.



CULTURE SHOCK

Based? London

Biggest tunes so far? 'The Bypass' was my first release on Ram and that was a big step for me. More recently 'Vice Chase' has been doing well on the dance floor and my collaboration with the Brookes Brothers, 'Rework', has been getting good exposure on radio from both Grooverider and Hype.

How long have you been producing music? I first started toying around with an old Yamaha home keyboard, PSR 400, if I remember correctly. But I wanted to know how to make the sounds I was hearing on the pirate stations. That prompted me to delve deeper into music technology. I started reading Sound On Sound religiously, and then it became clear that computers were eventually going to take over. I equipped myself with a Cubase machine running VST 3; it could run 8 tracks of audio and 4 VST Instruments...Big Time.

How did you get into music? I come from a musical family, my Dad produces/directs opera; my Mum started a charity to bring music into inner city schools and my sister sings soprano. Although I was exposed to a lot of serious live music I started discovering the music that really gripped me through radio.

If you had to choose between DJing or production which would it be and why? It would have to be production, I enjoy DJing, it can be a great buzz but building a tune from scratch is as satisfying as it gets for me.

What music inspires or influences you? I think it's important to cast the net as wide as possible. Recently though: Justice, Mr Oizo, Trentemoller also sets by Adam Bayer and Riccardo Villalobos. In some way any sound you hear might end up in your subconscious and inspire you. If I go out to an obscure night and the music's crap, I'll probably still go home at the end of it with an idea in my head.

What track would you most like to have written? That's a tough question, I think maybe Dillinja – 'Tudor Rose'. The beats just slide over each other and it has that breakneck vibe only Dillinja can do.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? In terms of D&B it has to be Andy C, having seen countless sets of his I'm still blown away time after time. One of the most rewarding things is hearing him playing my tunes.

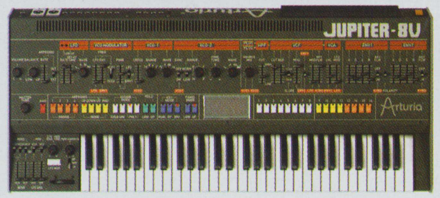
What event would you most like to play at and why? I'd love to play at a big festival like 'Sonar' in Barcelona, I like the policy of cutting-edge electronic music plus Barcelona is one of my favourite cities.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Simple, do you're own thing. Nothing beats sitting in your studio and vibing it out 'till the early hours of the morning, that's when the creative magic happens. It's important not to force out a track its better to just sort of let it happen.

What's next for you? I have an EP dropping on Ram mid-July featuring 'Vice Chase', 'Rework', 'Zeppelin' and 'Asteroids'. Asteroids is an electro/breaks track I did with my mate Pete, we've working on some more stuff on a similar vibe so there's more coming.

Contact: Nookie@atm-mag.com

Welcome to another **TECH SUPPORT!** This is the one and only place to find my personal selection of DJ and music production kit for your studio. In this issue we feature Steinberg's budget sequencer in SEQUEL, Numark's answer to Serato in VIRTUAL VINYL, we step back in time with Arturio's excellent Jupiter 8V, covert our record collection to MP3 with Citronic's AC1 USB TURNTABLE adapter, get hands on with the EKS XP10 controller, dive deep into the very impressive ReFX NEXUS…. and of course we share the taste on my personal selection of FREE plug-ins…



ARTURIA
Jupiter 8V

The Arturia Jupiter 8V is the virtual version of the classic Roland Jupiter 8 keyboard which includes a host of modern features: an advanced step sequencer, a new line of dynamic effects, a module combining LFO's (called Galaxy), and lots more…

The Jupiter 8 which was in production from 1981 to 1984 was a synth that not only inspired a generation of musicians ranging from Depeche Mode to Moby, it was also a unique machine that offered a sharp and crystalline sound while being uniquely phat.

The electro-pop community became quickly convinced by the qualities of the Jupiter-8.'Relax', by Frankie Goes to Hollywood was produced incorporating a Jupiter 8, and players such as Vince Clarke, John Foxx, and Martyn Ware were also using it. The path to classic status of the Jupiter started there. Other artists that have used The Jupiter-8 include Tangerine Dream, Underworld, Jean Michel Jarre, Depeche Mode, Prince, Gary Wright, Adrian Lee, Heaven 17, Kitaro, Elvis Costello, Tears for Fears, Huey Lewis and the News, Journey, Devo,Freddy Fresh, Simple Minds, Jan Hammer and BT.

Included within the keyboard are more than 400 presets, 32-voice polyphony, 2 oscillators per voice, 2 LFO's, 2 filter's and 2 envelopes. Analogue effects include dual delay, phaser and a flanger.

Arturia Jupiter 8V is the latest in the re-creation of classic synths being converted into virtual instruments and about time to! The old Jupiter 8 keyboard has been a particular favourite of the Detroit Techno scene from day one and it's great to be able to bring back the old warm analogue sounds of yesteryear into today's digital age.

Price: around £150

For more info please visit www.arturia.com

CITRONIC
AC1 Turntable Pre-Amp

The Citronic AC1 is a neat little device enabling you to connect your turntable directly into your PC or Mac. Ideal for transferring your record collection into MP3 with minimum background noise / hiss. This high quality USB soundcard is designed to connect your turntable, mixer or CD player and convert the signal to digital, the USB connector plugs into your PC/MAC and allows you to record the audio using the software provided.

The AC-1USB has many uses apart from recording vinyl and DJ use, it can also be used to record live bands, simply by connecting to the record output of your mixing desk you can capture the live sound.

Supplied with Audacity software for windows. Audacity is a free, open source software for recording and editing sounds available for Windows, Linux and Mac OS X. The AC-1USB can also be used with other sound recording sortware.

Price: around £40

For more information please visit www.citronic.co.uk

REFX
Nexus VSTi

Nexus from ReFX is a next generation soft synth with over 650 extremely high quality preset sounds plus 3 optional expansion roms. The interface is very user-friendly with 5 different skins to choose from. Loading up each sound and previewing them can be done in the main window and takes very little processor power from your computer. This VSTi looks and works just like a hardware sound module and most importantly the sound quality is first rate.

Each bank of sounds are marked clearly into their respected genres be it pads, piano, leads, drums, etc. The built-in arpeggiator is very simple to use and program and can create some devastating rhythmic madness!

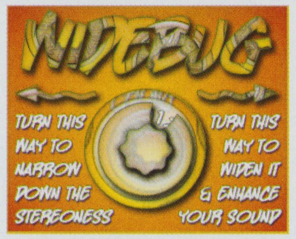
Soft synths have come a long way over the last couple of years and I was never too convinced with the warmth of the sounds generated from plug-ins, to compare hardware and software sound modules in the past used to be a non-starter but these days with great sounding VSTi's like Nexus the future is looking phat!

Price: around £200

For more information please visit www.refx.net

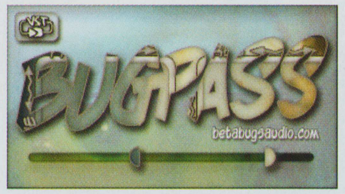
FREE STUFF! Four of the best FREE plug-ins!

Tape Delay
A simple Tape Delay plug-in that's taken from the Dub Siren plug-in. For more information head over to www.interruptor.ch

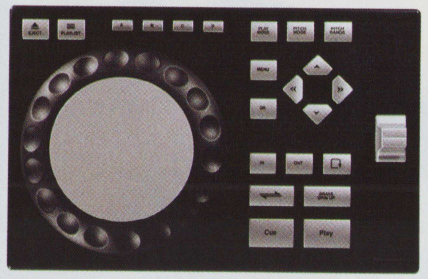


Widebug
WideBug is a simple tool to enhance the stereo sound of your audio. Info @ www.betabugsaudio.com

Simple Squeeze
One-knob compressor that simultaneously controls threshold and gain, the more you crank it, the more squashed your signal gets. Download it from www.betabugsaudio.com



Bugpass
A funky little bandpass and notch filter plug-in. For more information check www.betabugsaudio.com



EKS
XP10 USB MP3 Controller

The XP10 is an MP3 playback controller for playing your digital audio files. This is state of the art as far as MP3 DJ software goes. And it's all built into a controller that weighs 400 grams and is only an inch thick. It's fully controllable, and can perform the sort of vinyl emulation you'd expect - scratching, spinbacks, seamless looping, reverse etc, and just like vinyl and the very latest CD players, you can stop the digital sound with your fingers and use the wheel to cue.

The XP10 connects to your PC through USB. It needs no external power (it's a USB bus powered device). You connect it to your mixer, and using the XP10 pad, control the software (which you can download free of charge) The software is not restricted in any way; you can try it out without the XP10 hardware. The XP10 also has a built in sound card, with normal phono outputs, which delivers hi-fi quality MP3 playback. The sound quality is excellent and the signal to noise ratio is extremely high, far outperforming your normal PC soundcard.

My only concern is the price, if anything it may seem a little pricey for a solo controller when there are so many other twin mp3 controllers out on the market today however unlike many of its competitors the build quality of the XP10 is very precise.

Price: around £230

For more information please visit http://eks.fi/

NUMARK
Virtual Vinyl

Numark enter the virtual vinyl market with, er… Virtual Vinyl! Although not the most original name but you can't ignore the brand name that has been at the forefront of DJ'ing hardware for more than 2 decades!

Competing head-to-head with Rane's Serato Scratch, Native Instruments Scratch all the other scratches Numark are entering the market with a definite contender. But unlike its main competitors this little baby has one feature that will sure to win may fans… VIDEO!

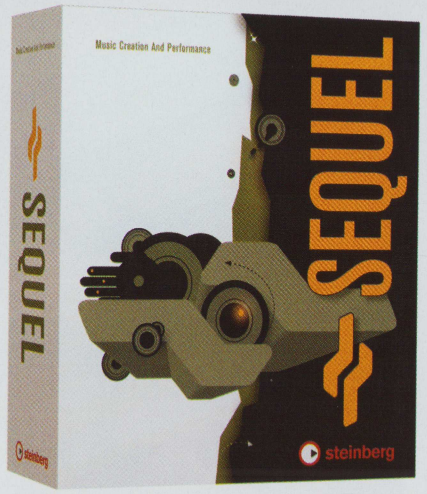
If anyone has been fortunate enough to witness the amazing live show from Coldcut then I'm sure your imagination will be running wild right now! Personally I think visual content is very important these days within a DJ / VJ live set and Numark have raised the expectation bar when going to hear / see your favourite DJ in today's over-crowded superstar DJ market. Virtual Vinyl gives access to a whole new world of video mixing possibilities. Turntablists can now scratch, beat juggle and mix their favorite videos directly from their turntables.

Complete with a custom USB Audio interface, Virtual Vinyl lets you scratch, mix and sample digital audio and video files using any analog turntable or CD player. Using a traditional turntable or CD player and included control vinyl or CD's, Virtual Vinyl provides in-depth features including; master tempo, seamless looping, instant pitch-matching, automatic beat-matching, BPM-aware effects, hot-cues, sampling, and more. The software includes two independent zero-latency virtual decks, seamlessly controlled by traditional 12" records that DJs are accustomed to.

Virtual Vinyl's video output can be displayed on any video monitor, television, projector or computer with ease. Additionally, Virtual Vinyl is equipped to play any DVD, VOB, DIVX, MPG, AVI, and Karaoke (CDG), files.

Price: around £430

For more information please visit www.numark.com



STEINBERG
Sequel

The Grand Daddy of sequencer software makers Steinberg graces us with this absolute bargain piece of software with Sequel for the PC and Mac. This entry-level sequencer package comes complete with everything you need to get your first tune up and running with a few clicks of the mouse button! Anyone who's familiar with Apple's excellent Garageband will notice how extremely similar these programs are.

Included in Sequel are over 5000 loops and more than 600 instruments, definitely more then enough to get you started I'm sure you'd agree! The great thing about Sequel is that you know that you're in good hands with Steinberg's technology pedigree for making professional music software.

This really is a great first step on the ladder for anyone who is interested in making their own music but is easily confused by the complex interface of Cubase, Logic, etc. Previewing samples is very straightforward whilst running a loop in the main arrangement window with Sequel's file system, it even tells you what key the samples are being played at, nice. Recording your own sounds and instruments can also be done very easily.

Sequel also comes with over 150 effect presets including delay, filter, compression, distortion, chorus, flanger, phaser to name but a few with each audio and midi channel handling 2 effect inserts and 2 send effects. The master channel includes 2 effect inserts and 2 fixed master effects (stereo enhancer and maximizer). Full automation is also available on all tracks. Sequel is the ideal entry-level 'fully-loaded' music program for the beginner.

Price: around £70

For more information please visit www.steinberg.net or www.sequel-music.net

words: Ben Wilmott pics: Zen Inoya

On paper, the pairing of **MATRIX & FUTUREBOUND** isn't an obvious one. There's the geography factor for a start; Brendan Collins, aka Futurebound, lives up north in Liverpool, while Jamie Quinn, aka Matrix, is based in a leafy suburb of West London. Both have had considerable solo success too; Brendan on the likes of J Majik's Infrared and his own Viper Recordings and Jamie on his Metro imprint and Virus, the label his elder brother Optical runs with Ed Rush.

But a quick listen to their debut collaborative album, 'Universal Truth', and their teaming up makes perfect sense. If you've been anywhere near a dance floor in the last year, you'll almost certainly know 'American Beauty VIP', their explosive D&B re-rub of the well known tinkling piano-led film theme and surely one of the most heavily played promos of recent times. But, as the album reveals, there are many more strings to their collective bow than this, from deep rolling instrumentals to a spread of varied vocal tracks, from the ragga stylings of Raw Hill Kru's MC Spyda to the soulful tones of house legend Robert Owens.

Such eclecticism is something that Brendan and Jamie admit is one of the driving forces behind their creative process. When they do get together to make music, one of the things they have in mind is making something consciously different to whatever their previous production was. A good case in point being their forthcoming house-speed remix of Justin Timberlake (the call saying it had been officially approved by the label co-incidentally coming halfway through our interview at Jamie's). "We were asked to do a drum and bass mix", says Jamie, "but when we time stretched the vocals, they just didn't sit right, so we called up and said 'is it alright if we try something a bit different?'"

Not that there's much chance of Jamie repeating or re-using the sounds from his older material, having been forced to start again from scratch when his previous flat several streets away was burgled a couple of years ago. "I'd moved the studio back into my home at the time, went out for the evening and came back to find my whole flat had been cleared out", he tells us, "They took absolutely everything - they even took my copper jar! But it was quite liberating in a funny kind of way, because when you're used to a certain library of sounds there's a tendency to think of a certain sound and reach for it again instinctively. Losing them all sort of forces you to look at things from a fresh perspective again." With the twin computer monitors of Jamie's studio showing a bewildering array of virtual mixing desks, dials and sound waves set up for the Nu Tone remix that they're working on, we move onto the subject of equipment.

But before we start in earnest, Jamie has something he wants to get off his chest: "I know this is meant to be a sort of gear based article", he laughs, "a lot of people make a big deal about what equipment's being used, but I don't actually think it's that important." "It's more about what you have going on in your head at the beginning", agrees Brendan, "your game plan when you set out starting to make the music."

"There are certain ways you can find mathematical differences in terms of the software", continues Jamie, "but to all intents and purposes, whether you're using Logic, Pro Tools or Cubase, it all ends up sounding the same. It's more about what software you like using. That's why I like using a Mac now, because I've always used Macs and I know how to use them really quickly. You don't want to have to be getting out the instruction manual all the time or pressing the wrong buttons, because then you end up forgetting what you were trying to do in the first place. Like there's always this big debate about whether you use analogue or digital, but people have said to us before that they could tell a certain track was made using analogue gear when it hadn't been at all!"

Another important aspect to the pair's creative routine is the geography of their relationship. With Brendan based up in Liverpool, with his own studio set up for knocking ideas about, and Jamie also working on ideas separately in the West London flat where they record, when they do meet, there are usually plenty of ideas already in formulation. "There's something quite good about only having a limited time together as well", says Brendan, "because you can't afford to waste time. It makes you get on with things."

Do they usually agree on things? The pair both laugh, suggesting that, while the relationship is friendly, it can also be fuelled at times by a certain amount of creative friction. "There'd be no point in collaborating if we agreed on everything", says Jamie, "it would just end up sounding the same as if either of you had made the track on your own." "Anyway", jokes Brendan, "if Jamie disagrees with me then I just take him out into

the back garden and knock him around a bit!"

They work fast, we can assume. "Yes", Jamie says, "well, getting the initial idea down is done quite quickly and then a lot of the sculpting of the final product is done quite slowly." So, everything is done via Jamie's Macintosh G5, but what about software? Brendan used Pro Tools for a while, but says he reckons you're limited by the number of tracks you can run, concluding it's probably better for recording live bands than making computer music. Like Jamie, he's stuck with Cubase ever since, although they usually shy away from using the very latest version until a relatively bug-free version update is available.

"Pro Tools had all this additional processing power", adds Jamie, "so, when computers weren't so fast, the Pro Tools rig, in terms of effects, was much better, but now it's not really the case; all you really need to do is go out and get yourself a fast computer."

Most important is the Kontakt virtual sampler that they use in conjunction with Cubase (but is also compatible with other systems); the pair are particularly keen that its creators, Native Instruments, get a shout out in this article. It's in this mode that most of the work takes place. They usually start with the beats; the process involves finding numerous loops that work together, using precise EQs, compression and waveform editing Wave plug-ins to meld them together and make sure the flow of the groove can be built up and layered without cluttering or complicating the sound. It's this technology - another Native Instruments effects plug-in called Guitar Rig being a regular feature in their tunes - that has helped home producers compete with the multinationals.

"You're using a Wave plug in to make music at home and they're also using Wave plug ins to make Beyonce records", says Jamie. "In the analogue days you were using a £4,000 analogue Mackie mixer and they were using a quarter of a million pound FSL desk. You could never compete with that, but now you can use the same stuff as the best of the best." And indeed, if you're lucky enough, you can work with the best of the best too. As well as the 'so talented' MC Spyda of Raw Hill Kru fame, Sylo, Mister Who and Louis Smith, who the pair used after hearing his 'Animal' collaboration with Optical. Among the vocalists on the album is legendary house singer Robert Owens. Originally from Chicago, but apparently now residing somewhere near Hampstead in North London, his unmistakable vocals grace the album track 'Family' and was someone they'd wanted to work with for a long time.

Brendan is full of praise for the way Owens conducted himself in the studio saying: "It's effortless the way he does it. It's very dramatic the way he records the vocals; he really gets into it." "Plus", contributes Jamie, "when he does the talking bit in the track, it's very cool. You've got to be American to be able to do that!"

But the session very nearly never happened, disaster striking just before Owens was due to arrive. "We were all set up for him to turn up", Brendan remembers, "and then we walked out of the front door to go and get something, and, as soon as I closed the door, I got that horrible feeling and was like 'have you got the keys, Jamie?' And he was like, 'no!' "In the end", remembers Jamie, "we had to climb into the studio from the flat upstairs, which was kind of amusing."

Quite handy having a sympathetic neighbour too when you're pumping out the sounds, especially as Jamie and Brendan admit to having complaints before, in Jamie's case even when he and his brother lived next door to a deaf person, the vibrations alone were enough to elicit a complaint letter! "When you're mixing down then it's quite good to turn it up and get into the whole vibe of it", Jamie reckons, "but if you can get it sounding great down low then usually when you turn it up it sounds amazing."

In fact, perspective is what it's all about when it comes to finishing off a track. A pair of small, home stereo-style speakers is essential for checking that the bass end thrust doesn't disappear on domestic gear. In fact, the more set ups you can play the track on, the better, so, as well as taking a CD or dubplate (Jamie liking the former, Brendan the latter), with you when you play out, a copy to listen to in the car is always a good idea too.

In conclusion, work hard, but don't try too hard. "Sometimes we spend a whole day trying to get an idea to work", says Jamie, "then we get fucked off with it and try starting something new. Usually within 20 minutes you've got something really good going on."

The 'American Beauty VIP' 12" is due out in early August on Metro / Viper, followed by a 'Universal Truth' remix 12". Also watch out for the Matrix & Futurebound remixes of Nu Tone and Justin Timberlake.

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AIM & FIRE!

Words: Alex Deadman

CONTENT ON DEMAND

Back in 1994, the BBC aired a documentary about jungle. It was the first time there was any real representation of the scene on a terrestrial channel, a landmark moment. Without a VCR to record it on, the program was lost for years, and has only now, become available to view again through the internet. It was so different then. In the early days of UK underground dance music the only way to watch media relevant to your genre was to buy an illusive video release of an event. Anything that featured interviews with artists and explorations into the industry were practically non-existent. The videos that did exist were limited by their availability and the tracking on your VCR.

Nowadays the multi-media music industry exists in a completely different context. Anyone interested in a certain artist or style of music, no matter how niche or obscure, can get free content, which is specific to what they want via the net at any time. The general leap by most Internet users to broadband has led to the massive growth in online video streaming sites like YouTube, MySpace and Daily Motion. The bottom line for all music related TV is that viewers don't have to wait and see if schedulers deem something suitable for the mass market. With the click of a button - changing from the remote to a keyboard - people are making their own choice and their own channels now.

The epic battle between TV and the net concerns a lot more than the music industry alone. It's going to be big and it's going to be grimey, that's for sure. In many ways it will only add to the increasingly unstable footing of the major record labels. The net has been giving the CEO's at the majors, sleepless night's for years, on one hand they're tantalized by the massive potential revenue; on the other they're terrified by the prospect of piracy and loss of control. The old music monopolies are being shaken to the core. With people beginning to watch music related content online, it's just another un-quantified factor the net has produced. Underground music highlights the issue very well; as long as one person can upload a program then one person can watch it. It doesn't matter if there's only one viewer. Where the more mainstream pop industry has floundered, independent music, of all forms has flourished.

The main impact is massive change in the way all TV is made, who it's made for, and how it's delivered. Cable and Satellite companies have tried to up their game with features like live pausing and series recording from Sky+ but still, the only way a program can be watched, is if it has been aired. Virgin cable has gone for a hybrid approach, where the interactive TV guide, links to streaming content hosted online. It is ideas like this that will keep the traditional TV companies in business. At the moment, the main advantage for TV lies in the quality of the broadcast and the way that a TV is controlled (through remote not a keyboard). As bandwidth increases the quality of broadcasts online will increase. Although it will be a while before HD is available streaming online, it will eventually happen.

YouTube, much as we all love it is essentially rife with piracy. Although a lot of original content is produced by the users the most watched material comes from pirated programs, music videos and even films. After Viacom sued the Google owned company for $1 Billion last April a lot of content has been taken down. The idea of a partnership between Viacom and YouTube is pretty much unthinkable, but Google accused Viacom of bargaining through the courts, suggesting that Viacom liked what they saw and simply wanted a piece of the action.

Then along comes Joost. Joost is the much hyped and long developed project from the makers of Kazaa and Skype. Fresh from selling Skype to Ebay, Niklas Zennström and Janus Friis pooled all their cash into a new project based on delivering legitimate, high quality TV over the web. They had the vision and knew that the only way the big boy content providers were going to get involved with online TV is if complete security is assured. This is the premise on which Joost is based. It takes approximately 4 minutes for cracked versions of music from the iTunes music store to appear on the P2P networks but Joost seem confident that they can keep a lid on it.

Current channels include a Ministry of Sound site, an XL Records site and some other genre specific channels. Media giant and owner of MTV, Viacom, has recently struck a deal with Joost as has FOX, proving that they really will have programs that rival, or, are even the same as terrestrial, cable or satellite channels. It's possible that the rocky relationship between Viacom and Google/YouTube was a motivation to get in and get a deal early. The style of Joost is extremely clever; it marries together elements of online streaming and Peer2Peer file sharing to ensure that viewers do not have to wait for things to download. This move means that the bulk of the expensive moving of data is taken by the individual rather than Joost, very clever! Having checked out Joost (now in the beta test stage) we can't deny we were impressed. Although a lot of the content was old or slightly rehashed the application was slick and smooth.

The big questions are: How long will it stay free? How much advertising will be allowed (adverts are just starting to creep in); and can it really stop piracy? The weak link in the chain is piracy. If material pirated from Joost starts appearing on other, less accountable sites then the big boys like Viacom and FOX might pull out leaving martial law once again.

Whatever the eventual outcome, the battle will only benefit the viewer as companies scramble to provide more varied content at a higher quality and at a lower price.

RANDALL

01. Vapour – Don't Want To See - 36 Chambers Dub
02. Co mix – Strictly – Metalheadz Dub
03. Digital – Deadline (Drumsound & Bassline Smith Remix) – Function Dub
04. Randall & Vapour – The Last Stand - Mac 2 Records Dub
05. Hazard – Mr Happy – Playaz Dub
06. Lomax – Federation – Critical Dub
07. High Contrast – If We Ever – Hospital Dub
08. Rufige Kru – Is This Real – Metalheadz Dub
09. Doc Scott – Drums9507 – 31 Records Dub
10. Blame – Rush – 720 Dub

DJ LEE

01. Jazz Juice – Detroit (DJ Lee Remix) - Basement
02. Calibre - Model Way - Signature
03. Icicle - Late Nights - Dub
04. Marcus Intalex – Lowlife - Soul:R
05. Zero T feat Steo - In The AM - CIA
06. D-Kay & DJ Lee – Extacy - Metalheadz
07. Q-Project – Confusion - Machine Funk
08. Atlantic Connection & Makoto – Grapevines - Westbay
09. Eveson - Sweet Wonderful - Dub
10. Insight – Jawbreaker - Dub

ROHAN

01. Breakage - Come Back - Bassbin
02. Fracture and Neptune - Clissold - Play
03. Alix Perez - Resolution - Dub
04. Sabre - Hex - Dub
05. Breakage - Light weight - Bassbin
06. Naibu - Untitled - Dub
07. Digital - Gold Amen - Dub
08. Lynx and Aaron Jay - Ways - Dub
09. Equinox - Rockers (Nolige Remix) - Dub
10. Reactiv - Badlands – Breakin

LOGISTICS

01. Culture Shock - Vice Chase - Ram Dub
02. Matrix and Futurebound - Family (Nu:Tone and Logistics Remix – Metro / Viper
03. Logistics – Spotlight - Dub
04. Brookes Brothers and Culture Shock – Rework - Dub
05. Logistics feat Inja – Cold World - Hospital Dub
06. Cyantific – Nightshift - Hospital Dub
07. Commix – Belle View - Metalheadz
08. Logistics feat Pixl - No Words - Hospital Dub
09. Redeyes - Back To The Future - Dub
10. Break - Chaos Theory - Shogun

ROBYN CHAOS

01. Limewax - Golden Path - Obscene
02. Evol Intent - Era of Diversion - Evol Intent Records
03. Dylan & SPL - Dark Soul - Bastard Child
04. Proket - Show Me - Offkey
05. Limewax - One of Them -Lost Soul
06. Prode - Guta - Offkey
07. Current Value – Faith - Freak
08. Robyn Chaos, Audio & Dylan – Rapture - Freak
09. Limewax – Agent Orange - LB Recordings
10. SPL & TZA – Violation - Freak

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
V / Integral / Widescreen

Saburoko – Xodus - Dub
These guys are going from strength to strength with every production and this is the cream of the crop. This dub roller is one of the best of its kind with a killer bass line. (Lighters in the air)

Lomax – Palomar - Integral Dub
We have had our eyes on Lomax for quite a while now. With his solid production he has a knack of hitting the right buttons right across the board. Love the oldskool reminiscent step on this one. An instant rewind on all floors.

Syncopix – Tell Me - Integral Dub
Look out for this huge feel good disco summer anthem which gradually builds to the main breakdown. Being smashed currently by Marky, Bryan Gee and Fabio who exclusively have it.

Breakage – Clarendon - Dub
This is one of our personal favourites at the moment. A gradual builder with its interesting minimal off step beat pattern driven by a pounding dubby sub bassline.

The Insiders – Fantasy - Dub
These guys have been around for little while now and this one instantly grabbed us on first listen. On the summer time rare groove tip with a real catchy filtering hook and vocal.

Calibre - Blackjack - Dub
There has to be a Calibre track in the set and this one is going off at the moment. Classic Calibre on the moodier MISTICAL tip and a perfect set changer when upping to full flow.

Digital – Africa – Dub
We have a number of Digital's gems in the box at the moment, with this nasty tribal workout doing a lot of damage on the dance floor. Taken from his forthcoming album out later this year.

Makoto, Marky & A Sides - Untitled - Dub
This is one of the few tracks out there that we love to listen to at home and at the same time it always does the job when played out. Hope to hear more from this collab in times to come.

TC - Strictly D&B - Dub
Man of the moment TC trying something different with this bass guitar lick proving he can knock up a big hit in any style.

Lomax – Varrezano - Integral Dub
Timeless groove bringing fresh vibe to oldskool, showing yet another side of Lomax's versatile production. This can be dropped in many years to come – Classic.

FRICTION
Shogun Audio

Break - Let it Happen - Shogun
The next release on Shogun comes from the hottest producers in D&B right now. 'Let It Happen' has been quietly smashing dance floors for months and finally sees its release. Using a catchy dub reggae sample, chunky, rolling beats and bassline, this works well at any venue. Check 'Chaos Theory' on the flip for some mellow tech vibes.

TC - Get That Girl - D Style
Another dance floor smasher coming from TC, whose LP looks like it's going to do absolutely huge things. Proper Justin Timberlake intro leading into possibly the longest drum roll I've ever heard, dropping into a vibing, energetic stomper that's been smashing venues across the world.

Commix - Faceless (M. Intalex Remix) - Shogun
Marcus and Commix! Surely you can't go wrong with a beat with input from these artists. And you can't. The original was released last year and was one of the turning points for the label. Everything about it oozed class. Marcus has taken the track down a slightly different route, journeying down a kinda Detroit techno vibe and I absolutely love it. Due for release this summer.

Logistics - Colour Wheel (Friction & K-Tee Remix) - Hospital
Me and K-Tee really need to stop doing remixes and write some new tracks! This is the last one before we come with some new material and it's a tune that everyone seemed to jump on really late. We've kinda teched it out a bit and given it some more chunky beats, alongside a few trademark touches. Check it out!

Alix Perez - Dreams Are Made Of - Shogun
Mr Perez continues to progress his wonderful sound and this is one of my favourites from his forthcoming EP on Shogun due out in September. I think his greatest talent is how he just rolls out a sample with ease, turning it into a catchy hook in his own way. A beautiful tune, with lots more to come.

Commix – Be True - Metalheadz
Another album that's gonna be an absolutely must have and in my opinion will go down as a D&B classic. 'Be True' is probably the most well known track doing the rounds on dubplate at the moment and is rapidly becoming a modern day anthem. Using warm sounds and vocals, this captivates you from the start before dropping into a catchy bassline melody that rolls on and on. A track for me that will always work on the dance floor without compromising the music.

Break - Submerged (Calyx & Teebee Remix) - Subtitles
Calyx & Teebee keep this one pretty simple for them. A 32 bar intro jumps straight into a typically nasty bassline, which terrorises The End sound system every time I play it there. Definitely one for the mixing DJs!

Friction & Nu Balance - Robocop (Taxman Remix) - Playaz
Taxman basically does the job that me and Nu Balance couldn't do and absolutely smashes it. Tough, lashing breaks, with loads of twisted bass sounds. Due out on the Playaz label soon!

MARCUS INTALEX
Soul:R / DAT Music

Alix Perez – Crooklyn – Dub
Love this. Utilising the same piano sample as used by DJ Premier on his mix of the hip hop classic 'Crooklyn Dodgers', this tune just oozes class. Kinda continues where the Calibre classic 'Hypnotize' left off…deeeeeeeeeeeeeep.

Lynx feat. Kemo – Carnivore – Dub
The next single is another hip hop / d'n'b hybrid that packs some serious dance floor punch, without ever losing its integrity. Serious shit from this killer combination. Is there an album in the making here? I certainly hope so.

Calibre - Electric Soul – Dub
This deep electronic roller continues from where his DAT Music EP left us. It's pure Calibre, so simple and so effective. A distorted white noise break sits uncomfortably in the background then boom a big fook off kick 'n' snare drop in to max effect.

Duo Infernale - Feeling Blue – Dub
I'm a sucker for a bit of melancholy and this track comes with quite a large amount. It's a seriously clever blend of hard beats and bass and delightfully interweaving piano strings and keys. Think Jazzanova on steroids. Those crazy Germans.

Amaning Vs Dubwise - Smash VIP – Dub
This is how I like 'em, rough and ready, with energetic beats, deep rooted keys, cool synths and an absolute killer bassline. Proper drums and bass I tell thee.

Lynx and Alix Perez - Allegiance – Dub
Two of my fav producers of the minute combine here to make an absolutely astounding piece of music. Wow…this hit me like a ton of bricks…deeper than deep…total bassline manipulation…siiiiiiiiiick.

Bal - Venus In Furs – Dub
This long time DJ/promoter from Budapest has this year - after spending years learning the ways - found his production sound, and its bloody great. Venus In Furs is a very deep bassline orientated track quite reminiscent of the years when a certain DJ Krust was at his experimental best.

Calibre - Into The Breeze – Dub
Again on the electronic side, this is very dance floor friendly indeed. Kinda sits somewhere between last years 'Deranged' and 'Past Imperfect Future Tense'. I think its maybe time to try and get another EP off him. Now where did I put his new number?

Marcus Intalex – lowlife – Dub
Made this a while back and completely forgot about it 'till I heard someone play it the other week and thought, damn, that ain't so bad....now comes with brand new mixdown courtesy of ST Files, so its definitely going to see the daylight very soon.

ST Files - The Return – Dub
Shock horror, yes it's finally here, a solo track from the man himself. Never thought I would see the day, he-he, only joking folks this is still just a pipe dream, or is it?

CLIPZ
Audio Zoo

Dillinja – Special – Dub
Powerful beats and a crushed up filthy bass make this track a must in the box.

Clipz featuring Spyda – Pass – Audio Zoo Dub
This collaboration is either going to be Audio Zoo number 4 or 5. Spyda comes with killer lyrics, over some low end lashers, to get your trousers swinging.

Majistrate – Change – Valve Dub
Comin' on Valve, Maj delivers the goods on this big time switcher. Back to form from the Juice legend.

Die - Flash Point - Dub
The King of the rollers, DJ Die, brings the funk with this tight groover, forthcoming on his new label later in the year.

TC featuring Jakes - Raise The Roof - Dub
Tommy Boy flips the style, and brings some fresh product to the table feat Mr Jakes on vocals. Taken from his forthcoming album.

Clipz & Die – Untitled – Dub
This tracks been making heads turn and it's not even properly finished yet. This has been nicknamed the Kazakhstan roller by those in the know. Shake that moneymaker baby.

Future Prophecies featuring Dynamite MC - On Fire - Dub
Big tings from the boys from Norway. Dynamite MC brings the ragga styles crossed with Future Prophecies' big bashy drums resulting in dance floor madness.

High Contrast - If We Ever - Dub
Last review as I've run out of cheesy clichés. Must have heard this on road by now, Our boy Lincoln delivers the goods, with this massive salute to days gone by with this classy steppa.

MARK OD

01. Commix – Be True – Metalheadz Dub
02. C.A.B.L.E – New Infection – Innerground Dub
03. Lomax – Federation – Dub
04. Commix – Strictly – Metalheadz Dub
05. Alix Perez – Crown City – Innerground Dub
06. Lomax – Palomar - Dub
07. 2 Marx – With You – Dub
08. Saburuko – AM – Dub
09. Lynx – Distance Zero – Deep Soul Music
10. High Contrast – If We Ever - Hospital

SAPPO

01. Sappo – Pay The Price –Mutated Forms Remix - Advisory
02. Zen – Down To Earth - Grid
03. Tommy Boy – Lovin You - Stereotype
04. Heist – Don't Hold Back – Full Cycle Dub
05. Original Sin – Say - Ganja
06. DJ Vapour – Mr Mingus – 36th Chamber
07. Callide-Calm Before The Storm - Dub
08. Digital & Spirit – Phantom Force (T Power Remix) - Dub
09. Ego Trippin - Babylon 2007 Remix - Dub
10. Cabbie & Pappa G - In Your Eyes - Dub

KASRA

01. Dkay & Kasra - Spider - Critical
02. Cyantific - Serpent - Hospital
03. Lomax - Bad Cop - Critical
04. Silent Witness - Twin Town - Critical
05. High Contrast - Tread Softly - Hospital
06. Logistics - Lithium - Hospital
07. Bungle - Too Late Logistics & Kasra VIP - Critical
08. Break - Submerged Teebee & Calyx Remix - Subtitles
09. Matrix & Futurebound - Family (Nutone & Logistics Remix) - Viper / Metro
10. Break - Untitled – Critical

IMO RECORDS

01. Xample – Lowdown – Ram
02. Clipz – Rubbish – Audio Zoo
03. Pendulum – Blood Sugar – Breakbeat Kaos
04. Hazard – Busted – Ganja
05. Drunken Masters – Kill Bill (Taxman Remix) - Dope Ammo
06. The Great Drum & Bass Swindle (Logistics Remix) – Hospital
07. Double Zero – Flip Da Script – Frontline
08. V/A – No Smoke EP – Rufige
09. Majistrate & DJ Nicol – The Countdown – Nam Musik
10. Dirty Harry – Gun Fingers - Frontline

PEVERELIST (DUBSTEP)

01. T++ - Allied - White
02. RSD - Pretty Bright Lights - Punch Drunk
03. Cyrus - Paradise Dub - Tectonic
04. Martyn - Broken - Re:volver
05. Gatekeeper - Let Go - Punch Drunk
06. Pinch - 134 - Dub
07. Peverelist - Infinity is Now - Dub
08. Distance - Feel Me - Dub
09. Kode 9 - Magnetic City - Soul Jazz
10. Appleblim – Vansan - Skull Disco

Reviewed by: Franjunglepunk, Ad Vantage, Jeryl DOA, Lewis Base, Lucas Buck & Rockwell

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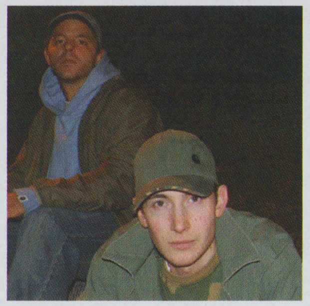
drum & bass reviews

High Contrast
If We Ever (feat. Diane Charlemagne)
Hospital

High Contrast prepares us for his third album with an outstanding twelve that leaves us in no doubt that the Welsh wonder kid is in a rich vein of form at the moment. Already battered on plate by the likes of Andy C and Hype, 'If We Ever' sees HC go back to the old skool to produce the 'Renegade Snares' remix that never was. An uplifting piano, reversed pads, 'Valley Of The Shadows' breaks and the ever-majestic vocals of Diane Charlemagne, make this a super-soulful, hands-in-the-air anthem. 'Pink Flamingos', on the flip, is a harder-hitting dance floor track with a synth guitar lead, trademark HC string work and an 'Airplane' style thumping bassline. This one's a must!



Verse & SP:MC / Prolific
Lost Souls / Back up
Crunch

Just as I began to wonder what had happened to Verse's flourishing Crunch label and its respectably deep and interesting output, a new outing is handed to me that has had plays from Fabio to Goldie to Pendulum, to name but a few. The A is a menacing, but enjoyable slam dunk beat attack with neuro flangings and dream-sequence atmospheres that comes from two of the scene's most adept and multi-talented affiliates. Prolific's offering on the flip finds resonant reese-esque LFO squirls and stepping-to-the-anaesthetic-bassline beats, blended nicely together to seal the deal. Hopefully this sees Crunch back for more. A mature sound coming from a reputable speaker.

Digital & Spirit / Digital
Phantom Force (T Power & Codeine rmx) / Dennis The Menace
Function

The eagerly awaited sampler to Digital's new LP kicks off with the slick and impressive remix of all time drum and bass classic, 'Phantom Force'. The duo clearly took their time working this one out, dipping the original break in ice-cold crystal and inserting a new dread vox, while tight bass squeezes, symptomatic knocks and subtle bongos all add sweetly to the mix. Digital's 'Dennis The Menace' on the flip starts with an FXed drum workout and heads hastily to the early hardcore days via 2007; breathing new life into contorted mentasmed stabs and rave style workings. Together with the impeccable A, this big beat bass flex should place this tough double header 12" in all boxes.

Commix
Be True / Satellite Song Type 2
Metalheadz

The album is ready and Commix aren't rampin' with this twelve-inch taster. Coming 'cross like an Art Of Noise remix of 'Terrorist', 'Be True' does just that in so many ways, and, like The Simpsons, works on so many levels. Meanwhile, the remix of 'Satellite Song' takes the original into more driving, techy territory. Big! Regardless of the pigeonhole of D&B you're in to, you're gonna bruk out to these tunes, as they contain the essence of what this music is about; mood and attitude, vibe and rhythm, and that all important bass that is missing from so many of the so-called big tunes at the moment. Headz are being held high by this Cambridge duo.

Dirty Harry
Gun Fingers / Fuck HQ
Frontline

Dirty Harry dons his flack jacket, grabs his rapid repeat rifle and steps into his infantry boots for the Frontline soldiers once again. For those who don't know, Dirty Harry is a pseudonym for a very famous producer who we shan't name. Maybe if we were just to say he's been 'Busted' recently, you might be able to guess who it is. Expect the usual high levels of quality control with this practical pair of bass fuelled, DJ friendly, dance floor mashing monsters. Both are packed to the gills with quirky samples, tight beats and warping basslines. But what could he mean by the title of the B side?

Various Artists
You Know EP
Midnight Sun

Kicking off Midnight Sun's first EP of assorted delights is the sublime vocal led 'You Know' from Belgium's Marcas; warm bass and slick production on this one! Next up, Jontey keeps up the house influenced vocal numbers with 'Starbright', where big horn stabs and sweeping strings carry the vocals along nicely as the bassline soothes your soul. Kaleb brings a choppy number to the mix in the shape of 'To The Stars', with its skippy breaks, twinkling melodies and bucket loads of musicality. The Outfit round things off with the deep and driving 'Changes'.

Various Artists
Endangered Species LP Pt 2
Black Sun Empire

Keeping up their stranglehold on the dirty and dark drum and bass market, the Black Sun Empire boys are back with another filthy EP from their 'Endangered Species' long player. Their own, 'Are You There?' and 'Unfamiliar', see the trio hold true to their uncompromising reputation, with clattering, metallic drums and grungy techno influenced vibes shining through the murk. Jade's 'Unexist' picks up the pace with pounding subs, reversed leads and more switches than a light switch shop, before Audio works his remixing magic on BSE's 'The Cooler' to devastating effect, rounding off this ultra-heavy EP. Sick like a hybrid strain of Ebola and rage!

Jesper Dahlback & DK8 / Metrik feat. Scotja
Murder Was The Bass (Metrix Rmx) / Through The Night
ELP Collective

The ELP Collective have made splashes throughout the scene in recent times with their own brand of techno influenced D&B. Previous efforts from Raiden, Pyro & Prode and Sunchase have won them fans across the globe, and it's now time for a new talent to step up. Metrik is a 20-year-old hailing from Brighton, not that you would believe it from the massive remix he has churned out here. You would expect him to be a Russian music making cyborg, who should've been decommissioned after the Cold War! If you like your D&B dark and dirty, just buy it and you won't regret it!

Atlantic Connection
Rocksteady / Burning Blue (feat. Illy Emcee)
Westbay

Having surpassed expectation with his first two releases on his own Westbay imprint, Atlantic Connection keeps the quality consistent with his third offering. 'Rocksteady' uses a silky smooth Monica vocal to full effect, mixing it with a rolling jungle break and some seriously warm bass for some pure Fabio fodder. 'Burning Blue', on the flip, features the hip hop swagger of Illy Emcee rolling over a simple, but effective skeleton break and deep brass bass. This one keeps true to AC's already established crossover vibes. Liquid class on wax!

Survival
Dawning / Shadow
Osiris Music

Kryptic Minds & Leon Switch's Defcom offshoot keeps things rolling along nicely with a pair of subtle, yet satisfying numbers from Survival - a name that we've been seeing a lot of in recent months. 'Dawning' is a nice enough low-key affair, in which a rumbling low end underpins twinkling elements of atmosphere, reminiscent of the Good Looking camp. It's 'Shadow' on the B side that gets my vote, though. A percussive dream of a tune that's held together with a warping and gentle LFO bassline; this one has been going down a treat in all of my recent sets.

Contour
Backwards Motion / Wisdom
Intrinsic

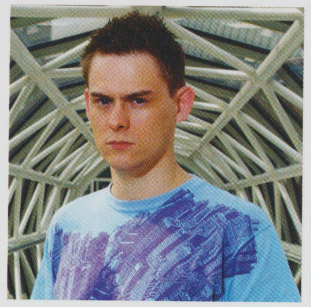
Swindon's best drum and bass label (alright, so it's Swindon's only drum and bass label) is now up to its seventh release and what a swashbuckling liquid production it is too. Starring Finland's finest, Contour, 'Backwards Motion' is a cunning combination of plucked guitars, punchy drums and crushing bass, topped off with some chopped vocal sauce. 'Wisdom' is a less obvious effort, but none the worse for it; rich atmospheres and warm, deep bass hits leave you gagging for more when all of a sudden an old skool vocal and a grinding bassline give it to you. Niceness.

Cooh
Dead Rock / (Audio Rmx)
G2

Don't let the skippy break intro of 'Dead Rock' fool you, as this is no light hearted romp through girly D&B land; oh no! Before long, the epic synth lines and impending doom-laden bass drop enter and you're immersed in a nightmarish world of hideous beats and horrible basslines. Speaking of hideous beats and horrible basslines, that's exactly what the Audio remix on the flip is full of too! Twisting the original into a more stepping and ultimately more satisfying blood-covered version that makes me want to invent some new and useless journalistic phrase to describe it (Murder-core it is then). You'll need a bullet proof vest before braving this one.

DJ Vapour
Mr Mingus / Make 'Em Bleed / (Mikey Deviant Remix)
36th Chamber

Here we have the first release from DJ Vapour on his own label, co-owned by the Shaolin Drunken Monk, a mystical figure who's good with, erm, figures! Three tracks of sublime breakbeat madness here, starting with the incredible 'Mr Mingus'; a track so fresh that everyone from Doc Scott and DJ Hype to Marcus Intalex and Fabio have been getting their knickers in a knot about it. Now that's saying something. On the flip, the two mixes of 'Make 'Em Bleed' offer firstly a reese bass monster and secondly a mad breaks mash up! Hot like lava in a palaver with a guava!



Lynx & Malibu Rhodes
Mariachi / Uno
Creative Source

After his stunning debut on Soul:R comes yet another first for Lynx, but this time on the label owned by the man who first highlighted the south coast producer as one to watch. Battered by Fabio on his Radio 1 show, 'Mariachi' alongside up 'n' coming producer Malibu Rhodes, stays true to its name with sweet Hispanic guitar licks weaved into the track's upbeat rhythmic foundation, which is in turn textured by a sea of sparkling detail to keep the mind, as well as the feet, enthralled. 'Uno' is equally as good, unless you like minimal steppers with cavernous basslines, like myself, in which case, it's better! It's all about the synth whiplash that sucks the air out of the mix on every eight. Grade!

Lomax
Innocent X / Trago Trash
Critical

Lomax is another one of those producers getting a lot of love from all corners of the scene right now. And so it was with no delay that Kasra reeled in a release from the Bristolian to keep his imprint firing on all cylinders. 'Innocent X' is another one of Lomax's variations on Commix's 'Talk To Frank' theme, and, although this blueprint is still doing the job, it's on the verge of becoming stale. If that's your view, then look no further than the flip where Lomax offers a far more individual take on the Metalheadz sound. Sinister and haunting from the outset, 'Trago Trash' is like the ghost of the Titanic docking into New York harbour. You gotta hear it to believe it.

Spirit
Mind To Mind / Smokescreen
Shogun

It's good to see Spirit's music popping up on so many labels of late. Although some of the tracks may be a bit samey and based around the same stab/reese principle, he's an artist who's been around for quite a while, but has never eceived the props he's deserved, despite making some massive tunes. This time it's Friction who's seen fit to give the man his dues, and the quality of the A side immediately proves Shogun's boss right. Trademark scuttling beats, a booming bass, haunting atmospherics and a stabbing middle breakdown make 'Mind To Mind' a killer. Spirit demonstrates his diversity on the flip with a crisp synth-led, Detroit influenced mellow stepper. Tidy.

Chook / Skynet
Trainspot / Atlantis
Full Force

Luxembourg's now fully established neuro tech representatives drop their ninth release, and do so with aplomb. Chook's 'Trainspot' is a thump kick and snare groover with serious intent, assisted by subtle percussion additions and hybrid mid range seizures, making it likely to be a great DJ tool. Tight, yes, but possibly lacking a certain something, yet still remaining a strong track in its own right. Meanwhile Skynet's electro progressive 'Atlantis' is a tasteful reminder of the mayhem brought about by the early Noughties wave of experimentation, exemplified by tunes such as 'White Lightening' (Virus) and 'Altitude' (Underfire). A well compiled release that sees FF drive its name well and truly home.

Spirit
Tone Track / Orchids
Inneractive

The eighteenth release for Spirit's Inneractive label and one of the many twelves he has floating around at the moment. So does this require a further look or should you simply head straight for his Shogun, Violence or Metalheadz Platinum releases? The reality is that it would be a mistake not to check out this slice of creeping refined minimalism (it's the one you'd ear mark in a set, but not know what or who it was) with locust-in-the-ear pads and cooler-than-cool beat attitudes. The slack garage amblings of 'Orchids' aren't as strong, but it is a deep and refreshing track that might be just what you need to tie a deeper, more musical set together. Do it.

Break
Follow the Heat / External
Engine Music

Break's latest of many releases sees him debut on Engine Music. Here we see him lay down some shuffle-funked, head-nod, grind-like, Digital & Spirit via Bukem on its way to Konflict business. Or more simply put, just good D&B. Holding us to ransom with phased synth rips, it is mysterious and smooth, much like 'External', which is reminiscent of his previous releases on Subtitles. That is to say, it's mixable, ultra cool and different to the point that it makes you wish that there were another word for funk. But that is what it has: funk! Looking back by way of the future. Keep on.

N:Phect
Crysis / Credo
Subtitles

This end of the spectrum tends to be about production first and then content. For the tech fraternity, both will be here, but, for some, the drums may be a little too squashed, despite the great use of space. Germany's Nphect debuts on a solo mission with two tracks of hi-end funk, with 'Crysis' splintering the needle with its keen edits; you'll need to visit this more than once to fully appreciate it. 'Credo' is a tough punch bag of animalistic FX and sound barks, all worked to the max and complete with an end-of-16-bar synth snarl worthy of an award. Those into Spor, Vicious Circle, Phace and Misanthrop will lap this up. Nphectious.

Hydrophobics
Criteria / Fermat's Theorem
Modular

New Italian label Modular unleashes its third release and it's an excursion worth going on. Just take the underworld flanging tech trance of 'Criteria', with a nod to the likes of early Shadow Law and Kiko, it gracefully meanders through clouds of colourful lead lines and delays to deliver a very listenable piece that should benefit a set covering neuro, tech and deep material, much like the brain rave fumes of the flip. The production may be lacking a certain edge, but in all essence it's nothing to complain about and it shouldn't hinder the hunting down of a good record for those who require a little something else from their beats.

Johannes Ahlberg
Pitch The Nature (Amex & Kaiza Rmx) / Shrinz (Quadrant Rmx)
TILT

Doing what they do best, the TILT crew have dropped another slab of lose-your-mind freshness. Amex and Kaiza's remix of Swedish techno producer Johannes Ahlberg's, 'Pitch The Nature', skilfully blends the two genres together, using grated percussion and hyper rush hits that slide around and bounce off the next incoming sound; a fine achievement and a track to take seriously. American tech heads Quadrant take on the TILT classic 'Shrinz' on the reverse and introduce old skool BC style paranoia stabs and C4C-esque punch bass beats. Whether you open with it or plant it deep within the mix, this is a potent addition to your arsenal. Fetch.

Subwave / Ninebar
So Twisted / Stand Up
Chronic

Bryan G's big, bad and heavy label continues to put the smackdown on sound systems across the globe with its latest pair of ball-breaking bassbin busters. Subwave is the latest producer on the scene that everyone's talking about, and, when you hear 'So Twisted', you'll realise why. Twisting and urgent bleeps mingle with stepping, crispy breaks, that infectious "so twisted" vocal and a rib crushing bassline for assured satisfaction. Ninebar steps up on the flip with the equally repulsive 'Stand Up', a foul blend of dance floor disease that'll spread through crowds like VD in a whorehouse. Big, bad and heavy indeed!

D Struct
Merkaba
SKC
Recharger 2007
Nerve

In today's climate, getting to 20 releases means your label has definitely got staying power, and that's just what Scottish D&B imprint, Nerve, have just achieved. Since its inception, Nerve has put out some great music from a variety of producers both well known and up 'n' coming. This time it's the turn of D Struct with the mechanical nightmare 'Merkaba', with its strong hook catching your imagination and not letting go! On the flip, SKC reworks 'Recharger' for 2007 and brings all the feel of the original bang up to date for today's market.

drum & bass reviews

Saburuko
Cairo / London
Future Thinkin

Keeping to their ethos of supporting fresh talent, the Future Thinkin camp give the nod for Brooklyn duo, Saburuko (meaning "one who serves"), to follow up last year's excellent 12" from Sabre and prove their "breakthrough of 2007" tag. And prove themselves they do, with an eclectic 12" that, thanks to the tribal half-time rhythm, progressive percussion and depth charge, bellows of the 'headzy 'Cairo', and the Chicago house stylings of 'London', will appeal to both the yings and the yangs. Although not quite reaching the heights achieved by its predecessor, a high level of quality has certainly been maintained on a twelve that bodes well for the futures of both parties.

Ghostface Killah feat. Ne-Yo & Kanye West
Back Like Dat (Marky & Bungle Remix)
Bootleg

Oh yes! The long awaited Marky & Bungle remix of Ghostface Killah's astounding 'Back Like Dat' featuring Ne-Yo and Kanye West is finally available to purchase on a sneaky one sided white label, despite initially being lined up for an official release. Classy hip hop blends smoothly with a super tight, endlessly rolling break, and a bass so warm you could cook eggs on it. If you want a copy of the biggest slice of melodic liquid D&B to come out this year, you'd best grab a copy of this before Def Jam start cutting people's fingers off!

Instra:Mental vs Drkstr
Comanche / The Chamber
Darkestral

As smoke signals appear on the horizon, a faint patter of war drums intensifies dramatically from a distant crackle to a distinct thunder. The toms beat out a familiar beat, an ancestral beat, a beat that demands the headz to stand up and be counted; this is a call to arms. As the horns begin to sound and the galloping of horses approach, an irreversible end becomes a distressing reality. Are we brave enough to save what we hold dearest? The reverse brings fearful panic rather than apprehension. Our surroundings are creaking and slowly imploding around us as we try to alert anyone who will listen of our potential suffocation by clanging out our doom. Has our fate already been sealed?

The Factory
Couldn't Love You More (Manifest Remix)
Toolroom

The man like Manifest takes a break from working on his debut solo album to take up remixing duties on house anthem, 'Couldn't Love You More' by The Factory, a production trio made up of none other than Pete Tong, Paul Harris and Jay P. Reminiscent of Kemal's remix of 'Possession', chunky hip hop beats, distorted bass cushions, robotic squelches and Victoria Horn's sultry vocal set the scene, before a ripping reese is injected into the mix. Wicked edits and gloriously glitched-out vocal cuts characterise this tough roller crafted specifically for those who like a touch of light at the centre of their darkness! Limited to a 500 one off pressing, so be quick!

Switch
Days Of The Week / All Night
Rubik

Switch is a name I've been hearing a lot about lately, and, with the productions on offer on this latest Rubik 12", it's no wonder. Opening with a skinny break soon padded out with extra bass drums and a hi-passed amen, 'Days Of The Week' is a subtle roller that seeps class from every pore, with luscious strings and poignant vocals sliding over deep bass hits; lovely! 'All Night' retains the class, but with a more minimal edge, familiar vocals and moving bass notes, making this delicate effort roll on with affable charm. Music to make sexy time to.

Icicle & Switch
Call Girl (feat. Alter:Native) / Do I Move You
Lucky Devil

Only three releases in, but Lucky Devil Music are showing they mean business and here we're dealt more dynamic grooves from nu breed producers, Icicle & Switch. Kicking of with 'Call Girl' and its prolonged intro of skipping hats and LFO pokes, you know something dirty is waiting round the corner for you as the vocal announces "20 dollar call girl". Sure enough she's sleazy as hell with a lovely pair of Bristol bass drones and tough drums. Sexy. Flip it for something a little more respectable with a nod to Calibre and those liquid summer vibes. A wicked 12".

Mutated Forms
Behind The Scenes / Should I
Liquid Allsorts

Grid's Liquid Allsorts imprint continues with the same soulful sounds as it's becoming known for, with two cuts from Estonian artists, Mutated Forms. A big AI inspired floor shaking bassline is the core of this one, peppered with swirling strings and sax warbles, but the bass does, however, sound out of key with the pads surrounding it at times. 'Should I' is a more successful piece of dance floor flow, with a crisp combination of cute vox, organ layered bass and clattering beats fit for any dance floor. Fans of Marky and the Innerground sound should be on this.

Pendulum
Blood Sugar / Axle Grinder
Breakbeat Kaos

Hands up who knows this one?! Hammered by all for the past year and a half, 'Blood Sugar' finally drops signalling their last ever release for BBK before their move to Warner Music. However, from the sounds of this, it's probably a good thing. Curiously though, the spoken vocal present on most DJs dub plates has been left out for the release, which was perhaps its only saving grace. Luckily the boys redeem themselves with 'Axle Grinder'; an eerie piano and vocal intro lead us in before we're catapulted on a rugged journey through switched up beats and bass groans that remind us how good Pendulum can be.

D Kay & Mat
Jungle Funk / Twin Peakz
Brigand

D Kay teams up with Mat for 'Jungle Funk', a track that I've been liking for a while now. Epic melancholic strings open this, but they soon subside making way for a throbbing mid-range, and, as the kick drum thuds underneath, a spoken vocal asking us if we like it nasty and sweaty. Finally it drops with smashing percussion and a question/answer bassline, whilst the vocal continues telling us to get funky. Great for opening a set. 'Twin Peakz' is another big rollout, but with smooth pads soaring over the top and a rather unfortunate synth guitar line that rears up occasionally.

DgoHn
Master / Man Bith / Rhythmic Movement
Subtle

More atmospheric drumfunk action here from the Subtle camp, who give a debut to up 'n' coming beats maestro DgoHn. Layered aqueous harmony drizzles over hard, tightly edited breaks on 'Master', as a serene organ appears half way to offer the listener respite from the track's overall esoteric intensity. 'Man Bith' is all brushes as subtle chords and vocal excerpts leave space for the sub cushion and intricate edits to thrive. Last up is 'Rhythmic Movement'; flanged beats introduce you to deep chimes before the breaks are unleashed and the sub warms you up, whilst high frequencies feed back in the mix piercing your ear to allow the funk to flood in. Sheer organic bliss.

Matrix & Futurebound
American Beauty VIP / Ab Stab
Metro Viper

The last single from Matrix & Futurebound's impressive 'Universal Truth' album sees the duo rerun the fun on their massive 'American Beauty', providing the dance floor massive with a fresh VIP mix to get it back to the front of those bags. It's all about 'Ab Stab' on the flip though, where the duo provide us with some sensual summertime bliss for those more sensitive moments. House and Goa trance vibes filter throughout as varied percussive elements carry forward the track's rhythmic backbone and the 'Ab Stab' itself brings the track to multiple subtle euphoric crescendos. Undoubtedly not the last we'll hear from this successful production pairing.

Zero Tolerance & Alix Perez / Zero Tolerance feat. Steo
Dangerous Liaisons / Refusal
Integral

Following their acclaimed collaboration on Liquid V, Alix Perez and Zero Tolerance touch down on Integral. 'Dangerous Liaison' rolls out in the trademark style you would expect from these two; snappy breaks, thundering bass and an intricate use of samples enable the listener to lose themselves in the depth of the vibe. 'Dangerous Liaison' will definitely please fans of the more soulful side of D&B. However, the winner on this 12" is found on the flip, with the lush vocals of Steo providing perfect accompaniment to the 'True Romance' style grinding bassline and smooth soul licks of 'Refusal'. Integral is one to watch.

G Dub
Beast City EP
Ganja

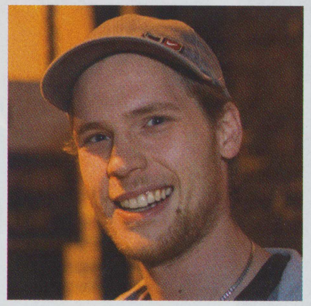
Geordie jump up duo, G Dub, return to Ganja for another instalment of shrapnel scattering beats and bass. I would be unlikely to surprise you by saying that all four tracks have been getting bashed in DJ Hype's sets over the past few months, but you may be surprised to hear that Goldie has also been showing his support. But it is not for this reason alone that this EP is much anticipated. G Dub are masters in the application of the distinct 24-bar drop formula, which makes their tunes so DJ friendly. The grittiest on the EP is perhaps the title track, but my favourite is 'Forever', which more subtly combines the moody with the melodious. Big tings!

TC
Where's My Money / Deep (Roni Size Rmx)
D-Style

After taking us 'Deep' and making us 'Jump' up and down like a 'Rockstar', before finally making us 'Flatline' and telling us that it's 'Game Over', TC comes back with the fourth single from his 'Evolution' album, and, not content with taking us through such a profound plethora of emotive experiences, he's now asking us, 'Where's My Money?' Bruv, after putting out so many big tunes, most of our money is probably in your pocket. Lend us a score? The flip sees Mr Size provide a tasty VIP of 'Deep' featuring new vocal parts from the one and only Dynamite MC and Hollie G. Available on limited edition picture disc, just to make doubly sure that you don't miss it.

Insight
Mode 71 / Yesterday's Tomorrow
Commercial Suicide

Insight debuts on Commercial Suicide with two techno-infused, yet emotively varied pieces. If you're expecting neuro, that's not the type of techno I'm talking about, as Insight has drenched these tracks in swathes of harmonic bliss and melodic acid. This is particularly the case in 'Mode 71', where ethereal pads and bleeps ride over a skeletal beat, before a pitching amen takes over proceedings in a track Klute fans will love. If you prefer looking on the dark side of life, you'll appreciated the paranoid intensity of 'Yesterday's Tomorrow', where an industrial mood creates a sense of dread, and sombre chords offer a glint of hope as they roll over most of the track like a melancholic mist. Beautiful.



Break
Genesis / The Drone
Symmetry

It looked for a while as if Break was gonna get stuck in a locked groove with his productions, but boy has he shown the doubters with his recent output. 'Genesis', on the A, sees the young producer offer a track that, despite its hard exterior, is actually quite soft-centred. But Lord have mercy, what is lurking on the flip? 'The Drone' is pure darkside dance floor menace at its very best. Reminiscent of early Bad Company and Optical, this storming masterpiece of simplicity juxtaposes two distinctly sounding riffs and underpins them with the duttiest of basslines. Don't hear…feel! If there were any justice, 'The Drone' would be getting caned by everyone.

Steve Spacek
Look Over Honey / Cyborg / For Yu Alone feat. Calibre
Exit

Exit Recordings are onto a winner with Steve Spacek, and the second instalment of his 'Black Pocket' series does not disappoint. The glitchy intergalactic vibes of 'Look Over Honey' and the crazy pitch shifting synth lead of 'Cyborg' result in stellar slices of original and ridiculously funky modern soul. Sadly, both tunes will be probably overlooked by the main draw for the drum and bass lover, the collaboration between Steve Spacek and Calibre, which, unsurprisingly, is a high quality affair. 'For Yu Alone' is a deep and mysterious roller in true Calibre tradition, with Spacek's vocals enhancing the vibe to magnificent effect.

Martsman / Cartridge
Antifunk / Just Let Go
Counter Intelligence

The seventh instalment from the Counter Intelligence stable sees German experimentalist Martsman striking gold by fusing the half-step style championed by luminaries such as Amit with golden age Full Cycle-esque basslines. 'Antifunk', however, is far from a cheesy jump up affair, with glitchy edits keeping the dance floor on their toes and ethereal synth swathes installing a futuristic and space age texture. Cartidge has apparently quit drum and bass, and this was produced five years ago, which is all the more surprising considering 'Just Let Go' on the flip is a trance-tinged, hard-edged drumfunk stormer. Please don't leave Mr Cartridge!

The Pedge
Screwface / Dubplate Special
Dread Recordings

Blimey! Dread's back in this mofo, and 'The Pedge' is pulling no punches on the A side. Sharp as a knife breaks step over distorted sub bass in a DJ Vapour/Valve manner, and the Dread tradition is continued with old skool stabs a plenty. A vicious vocal interlude on the intro and breakdown sets a sinister tone, on what is, all in all, a surprisingly good dance floor romp. The flip, although, perfect for big rave use, has a lead rave stab which makes the track seem a little dated.

Spirit
Scanners / Dead Zone
Violence

I had somehow not heard 'Scanners' before this 12" arrived on my doorstep, but from the moment my Stanton hit the deck, it has remained within my current top five. For those of you who, like me, have also somehow not heard 'Scanners', if you think you know Sprit, think again. The first sound to strike you is a discordant pad that distinctly resembles the string used at the start of the underrated 'System Error (Y2K)' on Ram. The high-passed intro rolls out and is finally interrupted by the thunder of a malicious reese riff. 'Dead Zone', on the flip, is comparably moody, but more like the Spirit we know.

BSE / JPS & Hooves
Exit Row / Maya
Obsessions

In responding to my editor's recent feedback to "cut the waffle", I'm going to attempt to describe this 12" in one word; very impressive. Ok, that was two words, but the Obsessions crew deserve both of them. I would advise every reader to, at the very least, listen to this release when it hits the shops. With 'Exit Row', BSE (no relation to mad cow disease) have created a harmonious cocktail of emotive ambience and energising beats. And that bass riff really does stick in your head. 'Maya' is on a more subdued tip, but is also a tight tune. It will be interesting to see where this label takes us with future releases.

Drumsound & Simon Bassline Smith
Let The Good Times Roll / Go
Bingo

A chopped amen, an Akai time stretched ragga sample, frantic 808 bass stabs and a sampled funk breakdown. Sound like a piece of '94 junglistical history? Indeed, 'Let the Good Times Roll' is a transparent reference to the AWOL @ the Paradise Club era. On the flip, 'Go' is a trip in the DeLorian back to the 21st century. The tune combines distorted bass hits and orchestral film stabs with a rolling 'Bambaata' style beat. This release is an interesting breather from the futuristic sounds of recent D&BS productions, such as 'Skumbag' VIP and 'Cold Turkey', because both tracks are uniquely organic. A welcome break from the norm.

Zen
Down To Earth / Tantrum
Grid

West London boy Zen returns to Twisted Individual's Grid after a year-long break. 'Down To Earth' is an upbeat roller that, in my opinion, sounds best in the mix. The tune can be identified by the pitched down "cut the midrange, drop the bass" sample loop that is layered over the warped bass. 'Tantrum' is the lesser of the two tracks, but may still gain some airtime. Note the '174 Trek' references during the intro and in the drum roll at the end of every eight bars. The warp bass is again ever-present. An above-average pressing that could appeal to the hardstep headz.

Sabre
Point Blank / Lady Fortune
Bassbin

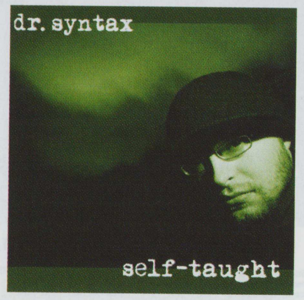
Time to get deep, as Sabre comes correct for the mighty Bassbin crew. 'Point Blank' is one for the headz, and indeed it's soaked in the space and atmospherics of an old piece of Metalheadz tunage. Ghostly ethereal pads run with a smooth old skool stabbing riff over the top of well mixed snares, bongo hits and deep subby bass. Spirit fans take note. 'Lady Fortune' hits from the off with a more straightforward two-step break and sweet strings. The breakdown is so warm with, presumably, our 'Lady Fortune' whispering in the background. Beautiful piano and guitar touches then ensue over this delicate piece. Good work Sabre.

hip hop reviews

Reviews by: Jesse Keene & Laurent Fintoni

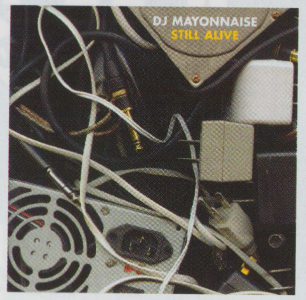
2tall Presents Dudley & Georgia
Beautiful Mindz
Eclectic Breaks

'Beautiful Mindz' is an album about you: your mind, your potential, and how the most innocuous meetings can lead to beautiful things. 2tall's first solo release since his debut album is a huge leap forward in terms of sound and breadth. Stones Throw's lyrical duo Dudley Perkins and Georgia Anne Muldrow are the voice to 2tall's music, and here they form an inseparable whole. Sung choruses, drawled rhymes, and powerful, emotive lyrics combine with great production to deliver a message that is more than the sum of its parts. Tracks like 'UR', 'Atall' and 'A Beautiful Mind' will make you feel like you haven't felt for a long time. This is more than hip hop and music, it's about life and its many beauties.



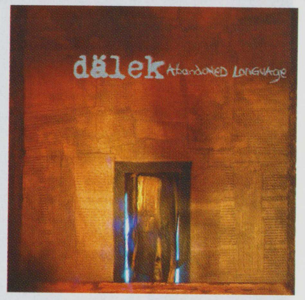
Dr Syntax
Self Taught
Beer & Rap Entertainment

Ladies and gentlemen, the Doctor is in the house! Syntax comes with those sorts of flows and social observations that make you go, "Shit that's just what I was thinking!" 'Self Taught' is a journey into to the mind of an MC and producer whose rapier wit sets him well apart from the pack. The beats are heavy with a good sense of diversity to keep you tuned in 'til the end. Guest appearances are light on the ground and well sprinkled throughout the LP, with Orifice Vulgatron, Wordsmith, Manipulate and Stig Of The Dump making their presences felt. This is a heavy debut album that comes smashing in with all the subtlety of Bernard Manning at a Bar Mitzvah.



DJ Mayonnaise
Still Alive
Anticon

This instrumental album delves deep into the pits of dusty vinyl bins and haunting soundscapes to bring a complete and diverse sound. Mayonnaise has learnt his craft well, although don't be confused, this is no turntablist record akin to something along the lines of Roc Raida or Qbert. This is about instrumentation and synth-laden harmonies. The beats do get heavy in places, harking back to the early days of DJ Shadow, but this is no real comparison. There is a mixture of jazz, rock, breakbeat, electronica and even a guest appearance by MC K-The-I (!!!), which breaks proceedings up nicely. This is a compulsive listen and a must for all. Top quality material.



Dalek
Abandoned Language
Ipecac

This group can never be classed as stagnant in their approach to making excellent leftfield hip hop. 'Abandoned Language' is their fifth LP and sets itself apart with its clever mix of dark, twisted lyrics, and intricate beats and production. Self described as their 'Dark Side Of The Moon', you are led through a melange of sound including old school hip hop breaks and cinematic string-driven instrumentals reminiscent of a Lynch score. The long and short of it is that this album is heavy and also charts the group's musical progression. A defining dark take on hip hop, 'Abandoned Language' blows every preconceived notion of the mainstream sound out of the water with the force of a rogue scud.

Dashiell
If You Let It / Land Of Naughty Hydro Bobbles
LLBB Beats

This latest 7" from US producer Dashiell comes once more with the kind of lyrical guest list most producers' dream of. And considering the man is still an unknown, upcoming producer, it speaks volumes about the quality of his beats. The main attraction here is 'If You Let It', where a bugged out beat rides on a skippy break that never quite settles, backed by a simple keys loop that keeps you on your feet. The lyrics add flesh to the bare musical skeleton, and when the likes of Wildchild and P.E.A.C.E. come 'cross, you know it's gonna be chunky! The flip features Strugglenaut and a bonus instrumental.

Waajeed & The Bling
47 Group Present The War LP
Fat City

The beat crunching maestro returns alongside a few friends. Waajeed has been making a name for himself over the last year or two and has appeared on some notable releases including Dabrye's solo album as well as being closely linked with Stones Throw. 'The War LP' comes at you hard with fat beats and even fatter rhymes from Ta'Raach, Invincible and Tiombe Lockheart, with a complimentary dose of Dilla production so you know it's going to be top notch. This album is pretty much 50/50 on the instrumental to vocal scale and definitely showcases Waajeed's ability to diversify his production, making for an extremely interesting and listenable album.

El-P
The Overly Dramatic Truth EP
Def Jux

Released off the back of El-P's 'I'll Sleep When You're Dead' album this eight track single features the original mixes of 'The Overly Dramatic Truth' and the excellent 'Smithereens' alongside remixes by Bass Clef and Cassettes Won't Listen. Wonkstep maestro Bass Clef takes a whole new approach to El's big production on his remix of 'EMG', stripping the track down to and giving it his signature vibe, while 'Flyentology' gets the Cassettes Won't Listen treatment with a smoother approach, laden with synth driven bliss. All in all a heavy electronically driven single, that adds new dimensions to the already established Def Jux sound.

Nomadic Poet
A Traveller's Tale
Red Sea Entertainment

The Nomadic Poet will be best known to most as the front man of London crew The Planets. 'A Traveller's Tale' is his debut solo project and is littered with guest production spots from the likes of Granddaddy I.U., Dagnabbit, Jon Doe and DJ Spinna. It's a solid piece of work and pulls together many elements of hip hop culture, touching on political and personal experiences. It manages to hold your attention as a listener by the weight of the quality material both in the substance of the beat and the well thought out and poignant lyrics. This is definitely one for the heads, and although it does not scream classic it demands attention.

Samon Kawamura
Translations
Nesola

It's hard to know where to start with this slice of sublime hip hop instrumentation. The press release likens this Japanese/German producer with artists of the moment such as Madlib, but the content of album spans far further than that statement in my opinion. Combining a live sound with a clever use of melodious hooks and samples, the album literally glides along like paper in the breeze, making it a truly enjoyable listening experience. Despite being as easy on the ear as it is accessible, it still maintains a thumping head nodding presence. 'Translations' is an inspiring album that manages to stand out amongst an already saturated instrumentalist scene. Pure quality.

Foreign Beggars
In It For A Minute / Black Hole Prophecies / (Jehst Rmx)
Dented

The Beggars have become synonymous with uniquely harsh lyrics and spine jangling beats. This offering provides just that, enlisting guest spots from DJ Vadim, Jehst, Dr Syntax and Graziella. The EP rolls along sinisterly, with the beats coming at you with that crisp yet dense sound that you have come to expect from one of the UK's leading crews. There are a few twists and turns, namely Jehst's 'Wild Wild East' remix of 'Black Hole Prophecies', where things go a bit more mystical in sound. It's another strong release for the Beggars and the Dented label, which shows that it's all about progression within the group's sound.

Def Tex
Thanks But No Thanks
Son

The crew with arguably the dopest flow in the UK returns with this heavy album packed full of hip hop goodness. Def Tex take the bar up another notch with tunes like 'Run', a live experience with percussion and instrumentation: it's a heady affair as the lyrics intertwine with the music perfectly. Rolling on through the album you are treated to turntablist tracks such as 'Time Lord' where things take on a more electronic feel while DJ Tags speaks with his hands. 'Thanks But No Thanks' comes crunching in with that distinct Def Tex style and again showcases their ability to rock a microphone at 10 paces. This is proper hip hop without a doubt so grab yourself a copy as soon as.

Pitman
Feel The Horn / Music Maker
Son

The self-proclaimed King Of The Tea is back and he's mad cos all he smells is coffee. There is no doubt that pretty much everyone out there has heard of this rowdy pit-dwelling MC. It seems that the days of Goldie Looking Chains are long gone, but Pitman isn't going out like that. It's easy to put this down as one big joke, but to be honest there is some truth in these tunes. Could these be the ravings of an MC who has simply had enough of prepubescents pumping Akon out of a 2 watt mobile? You decide, but the beats are pretty decent. The music maker is back and he's got the raging horn…believe!

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breakbeat reviews

Reviews by: SOTO & Mister Sushi

DJ Mutiny
Soulrunne / Remix
Botchit Breaks

Mutiny is back on Botchit to offer us another deeply inspired tune. True to its name, 'Soulrunner' delivers a one hit drum riff, percussive snares, and atmospheric, progressive guitar and piano samples. It begins life as a house tune, with an over-zealous, dreamy vocal, until a crunching bassline, a heavy break and some scratch tricks smoothly burst the bubble. This is a standard warm up tune and a testament to why Mutiny is causing ripples within many camps. The other side gives something more immediate, electric and beefed up for the floor mashers out there; an innovative stop-start mix that will make many convulse manically like an electro-loving robot on serious heat.

Hardy Hard & Lady Waks featuring Mr X
Minimal (Rogue Element Remix)
Menu Music

Well, this certainly does what it says on the tin! Built around a simple and tough plod-house-breaks groove, 'Minimal' basically pounds away incessantly from beginning to end. There's a catchy hook of a vocal, courtesy of Mr X, that keeps working its way into your head, and some well placed bleeps and other such necessary distractions that keep things sounding fresh. On the flip, Rogue Element whacks a kick on every beat and turns in a dirty distorted house remix nasty that's really going to get floors stomping with its monstrous persistent bass and relentless 4/4 assault.

Specimen A
Pop The Pin / Dirty Disco
Funkatech

'Dirty Disco' is like a twisted dream that takes you into the strange and hilarious world of Specimen A: a Manga cartoon electro rave surrounded by mental looking Japanese cartoon ravers doing robotic disco dancing with perma-grins stretching across their ridiculous faces. This has that cross between innocent electro funked up dance floor fun and a certain sinister dirtiness that hints at a darker side, which is funny, because on the flip, you get some right old rave-core dirtiness. You'll think you've been somehow transported to a South London warehouse circa 1999. All the moody bassline filth you can handle is on offer here!

Freefall Collective
100% People / Noodlegun
Resin

More dub style dance floor, catchy breakbeat business from the ever reliable Resin. Freefall Collective is a five-piece live breaks act that will be storming a summer festival near you soon. Warm and sexy vocal stylings and bubbling chatter from MC Manic riding over the infectious, overweight bass line with dancehall piano delays and bongos, is a combination that is 100% guaranteed to get waists winding. There's also an instrumental version, if you fancy some MC karaoke action. With an intro reminiscent of 'The Specials', complete with live trumpets and percussive rumblings, 'Noodlegun' is a skanking, dubby, positive feeling, rootsy breaks that perfectly sums up the Resin mantra.

The Devil's Gun
Gold Dust / (Boy 8-Bit Rmx)
Eat Electric

The successor to 'Raising The Beast', this new slab of accessible breakbeat offers something for everyone. The original mix sounds slightly cheesy with its big house beat and tech bass sound, and wouldn't seem out of place in a huge, overcrowded club full of "euro" crusties, but, like many singles, the gems are the remixes. The Boy 8-Bit remix is served up in a wickedly rich minor key, and exorcises a hollow, moody electro sound with a resonating bassline. They may suit the new dance act tent better than the dark, sweaty confines of a breaks club, but The Gun demonstrate that variety is definitely the spice of life.

Breakfastaz feat. Ivory
Girls, Money Drink & Drugs / (The Devil's Gun Rmx)
The Breakfast Club

The Breakfastaz enlist the punked up, distinctive MC stylings of Ivory on this big, phat and deceptively simple backing track from the surprisingly restrained Breakfastaz, who create just the right amount of space required for the eloquent and finely crafted vocal deportment that we have come to expect from one of the finest up-and-coming MCs around. This is tough and to the point, with the Breakfastaz usual tech-rave-breaks stylings being very apparent, albeit in a slightly more understated way than usual. The flip sees The Devil's Gun stomping electro house remix. A quality second release from The Breakfastaz new label.

Freeflow 45 & Flore
Peaktime/Inside & All Right / (Plaza De Funk Rmx)
IBreaks & iBreaksFunk

Living up to its name, 'Peaktime' builds and builds with tough beats and techy arpeggiating bass, old style hip-hop scratches and plenty of bouncy pipe action to boot! The flip sees more tech edged breaks with a distinctly '90s flavour, perfect for early doors or the day after the night before. 'All Right' fuses techno stylings with hippy-esque vocals before kicking back in with all manner of hard edged synth workouts and chopped edits. Plaza De Funk delivers an up and funky remix that flicks all the right switches and then descends into a frenzied acid workout.

Backdraft
Off The Wall / Nicotine
Botchit & Scarper

Eddy Temple Morris' favourite Northern scary bass botherers, Backdraft, return to Botchit with filthy guitar stabs and rotten-as-you-like bass hooks, complete with sneering female punked up vocal samples and enough swaggering attitude to worry Johnny Rotten. 'Nicotine' is a far funkier affair with a cleverly crafted contagious James Brown groove, but don't go thinking this is an easy ride as the Northern bass shakers hit the lowest of notes and keep the party going with rave horns, female MC samples, and energetic drops and fills. Look out for their new compilation, 'Back2BackBotchit'.

Nick Thayer & Micah / Phetsta
Scrambler / Four:Eight:Three
Passenger

The runaway train that is Aquasky's Passanger imprint continues its journey in dance floor shaking mayhem with yet another must have twelve. Taken from their forthcoming compilation, 'This Way Up', which has seen them collaborate with the likes of (deep breath) Rogue Element, DJ Friction, Dopamine, Backdraft, Klaus Heavyweight Hill and countless others, you know this sampler is going to be a first class ticket. For the A side, Nick Thayer & Micah team up for 'Scrambler'; it's big, it's bad and it'll bust many a speaker! Elsewhere, Australian D&B producer, Phetsta, takes us on a techy rough ride with his debut breaks track, 'Four:Eight:Three'.

Ed Solo & Skool of Thought
Tug Nut (feat. Deepcut) / Terrabyte
Supercharged

Lifted from their forthcoming LP, 'Random Acts Of Kindness', this new 12" sees a distinctive change in sound for Ed Solo & Skool Of Thought. Soaked to the bone with twisted out electro keys and low end crunchy bass, 'Tug Nut', which is co-produced with Deepcut no less, will tear any dance floor to bits. Guaranteed to sit pretty in both electro and breaks sets, I could even see the more daring techno jocks picking up on this track. On the B side, the Brighton chaps get busy with 'Terrabyte', taking us on a more straight up journey. Tip top!

Metamatics
Personal Jesus
Hydrogen Dukebox

Covers in the dance world in most part end up sounding like musical suicide, but when done well you can smell the roses from a mile off. Luckily, in this case, Metamatics' reworking of the Depeche Mode classic, 'Personal Jesus', gets the golden award this month. The combination of acid laced tweaks and heavenly woven female vocals, with masterfully crafted drums, make this a soothing ride. On the remix front, further gems are a plenty. For a laid back trippy workout head for the Plumbline remix, while on a more dance floor tip, Deer gets busy. Highly recommended.

Spoon Wizard
Shoe Monkey (Tom Real & Rogue Element Rmx) / Una Funker (Will White Rmx)
Functional

I like the number fifty. For some it's an age of change, for others a moment to celebrate past successes. When a record label reaches this number, it's often time to scan back over their back catalogue of musical outings and that's just what the Exeter based Functional imprint have done. With a compilation on the horizon, it also seemed fit to enlist a couple of top-flight producers to touch up some golden oldies. The unstoppable duo of Tom Real and Rogue Element get their fingers sticky with 'Shoe Monkey', reshaping it into a monstrous electro stomp fest. Check the flip for a Will White refit of 'Una Funker'.

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Reviews by: Al Storm & DJ Spinback contact: Jason@imorecords.net / 07976298165 / www.imorecords.com

Fracus & Mozz Featuring Vicky Fee
Hold On To Me (Mixes)
Warped Science

It's a Warped Science debut for both Midland's boys Fracus & Mozz as they finally unleash the monster that is 'Hold On To Me' (featuring spine tingling vocals courtesy of Heaven 7's Vicky Fee). The A side is a brand new Fracus Remix for 2007, with typical driving percussion and sweeping musical breakdowns, making full use of the powerful vocals, it also switches energetically between dance floor friendly riffs and ravey patterns. Flip over to find the original 'Hardcore Underground' mix, complete with its epic string and piano intro, punchy percussion, arpeggiated riffs, and a very cleverly programmed bouncy mid section.

Seduction & Al Storm
Make The Track Spin (Rmx) / Louder!
Maximum Impact

Time for more thumping hardcore from the Maximum Impact camp now as 'Make The Track Spin' is given a well crafted update for 2007. Cleverly programmed synth patterns, lush twinkling piano breakdowns, and dreamy strings are all complimented by the choice vocal cuts and rap samples, roaring layered saw tooth leads and tight percussion. Definitely one for those who like dance floor friendly hardcore that doesn't rely on vocals. On the flipside is 'Louder!' which is a much bouncier affair. Bastardized rap vocals, 'Makina' style synth sweeps and a super happy Euro riff offer something a little different.

Spinback & Storm
Hardcore Style / Your Love (Nu Foundation Remixes)
Definitive Dance

Ireland's young prodigy Nu Foundation steps up to remix table and delivers two 2007 updates for Definitive Dance. The original smashed it a few years ago when it was released and this will hopefully do exactly the same! Familiar vocals, intelligent programming and dance floor friendly arrangements combine with smartly used effects and nifty percussion to create another worthwhile purchase from this consistent label. The pick of the pair is 'Your Love' with its arpeggiated riffs, thigh stroking strings and energetic pianos. The featured vocal found fame with hardcore in 1995 with Infernus's track of the same, and happily they work just as well in a more modern context too.

Adam Harris / Joey Riot
Hyperspeed (Sy & Unknown Rmx) / Jumpin' Pumpin'
Quosh Records

An EP from the far corners of the UK; the Welsh wonder kid Adam Harris is given the Sy & Unknown remix treatment as 'Hyperspeed' is Quoshed up to the max. Frantic riff patterns, oldskool pianos and typical percussion samples make for a bouncy and energetic workout, complete with chavtastic vocal samples. On the flip is 'Jumpin' Pumpin'', which makes use of some familiar vocal samples, and some familiar stab patterns too (one for the oldskool?). An eclectic mix of samples all neatly programmed together to create a full on bounce-a-thon in true Quosh tradition.

Force & Ritman
Simply Electric 2007
UK Dance

A producer and indeed a record that need no introduction. Not quite sure when this one hits the shelves and some might say it's dangerous to revisit tracks that were as near as anyone got to finding the perfect recipe for the hardcore dance floor. Not so for Force & Ritman, who give this classic track a thoroughly impressive rework for 2007, with help from brand new vocals courtesy of Lisa Abbott. The uplifting groove of the '90s version is retained but with a whole array of excellent new sounds, live guitar loops and a heavy drum'n'bass breakdown that has no right to sound as good and appropriate as it does in such an uplifting track.

Northerstarz / The Technician
Stay (Squad-E Remix) / Distant Dreams (DJ Impact Remix)
White

Some might say that 'Shakespeare's Sister' aren't an act whose work translates easily into the hardcore genre, and after listening to this you might agree. Squad-E does a good job on the remix tip with tight production and some interesting acid patterns and chunky bass lines, but cannot fully mask a fundamentally unsuitable time stretched vocal. The b-side is of a similar style, DJ Impact flexing his production muscles with some understated dance floor friendly riffs and nicely produced percussion. A solid track that's let down by the tuning of the vocal in places, and with so much original hardcore being written, its difficult to get too excited about another couple of covers.

Brisk & Ham Feat. Lisa Marie
Into Your Arms
Next Generation Records

As we've come to expect from the Next Gen camp, two very contrasting mixes of a high quality original vocal track to choose from here. The Brisk & Vagabond mix heads straight for peak time with no holds barred, innovative fills and hi-energy programming, working superbly with Lisa Marie's perfectly executed vocals and a rolling D&B section complete with distorted bass lines and chopped hoovers. The Eclipse mix on the flipside concentrates more on the musical elements, and makes good use of spine tingling chord progression over which the song itself has been written. Less in your face than the flip, but still very much a mix for the dance floor.

DJ's United
Everytime You Touch Me / Kick The Flow
Maximum Impact

Uproar's DJ Seduction teams up with Al Storm once again to create more bouncy mayhem, as Moby's classic track of the same name is given the Maximum Impact treatment. The tight percussion and pounding kick and bass mix is complimented well by cool reverb effects on the lead line and a piano breakdown sent straight from heaven. Alison Wade provides the vocals, which sound surprisingly better off for the overuse of the popular auto tune effect. 'Kick The Flow' is an energetic, meticulously programmed workout strictly for the peak time DJ set, with cool reverse effects, trippy, glitching vocal effects and hypnotic riffs.

Fracus & Orbit1
Always Stay With Me 2007
Warped Science

Two mixes to choose from here, both making good use of the strong original vocals. The Orbit1 mix is the more obvious of the two, with soft sweeping strings and anthem-tastic chord based riffs. The vocals are twisted and distorted throughout the intro and outro and make for an interesting DJ mix. The Fracus mix is slightly darker in its approach and focuses much more on studio trickery to create something slightly different for the flipside, with breakbeats and tearing basslines all making welcome cameos amongst the mayhem.

Scott Brown Vs Ultrabeat
Elysium
AATW

One of hardcore's most recognizable riffs, and a record that arguably changed the shape of the music we listen to today, finally gets its 2007 remix release in the shape of a tidy double pack featuring mixes in various styles. The hardcore mixes come courtesy of Scott Brown himself, remaining true to his original pianos and riff which work well alongside the new vocals written especially for this release, and the Styles & Breeze mix. This has probably seen the most airplay and rightly so, trademark top end production and musicality makes the best of a euphoric vocal and justifiably extends the life of one of hardcore's best tracks.

SMD1
Remixes
Universal

Another of hardcore's greatest moments gets the remix treatment this month. The remix comes courtesy of Sparky & Sytronik, who make good use of the instantly recognizable pianos and samples, giving the percussion and effects an update for 2007. Flipping over we find the 2007 Scouse House remix which again makes good use of the original elements of the track and proves that a good idea can transcend many genres and indeed years of club and rave playouts. Long live SMD1.

Alistair Storm
Love The Way
Warped Science

3 mixes to choose from, of a track that you're bound to have heard unless you've been raving in your greenhouse for the last ten years. Originally appearing on Fusion's 'Point To Be Made' compilation a cool ten years ago, the original mix is everything a 1996 vocal slammer should be with stabs, rap samples and crunchy percussion. Good though it is, this EP is all about the updates: 'Love The Way' is driving anthem fodder bringing Donna Grassie's unmistakable vocals into 2007 in style, with screaming saw tooth leads and crazy fills. The 'Ravey' mix is probably the pick of the bunch though, combining the musical elements with some darker vocoded effects and electro-style effects and programming.

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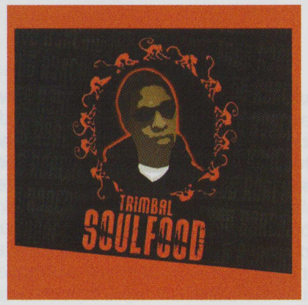
Reviewed by: DJ Markle & Chris G

Various Artists
Box Of Dub
Soul Jazz

On 'Box Of Dub', compilation kings, Soul Jazz, venture into the low frequency undergrowth of dubstep to pull together a canny selection of exclusive music. Fans of the compelling, yet unhurried pace of Burial will be greeted with his most accessible track to date in the shape of 'Unite'. Skream delivers two tracks of subtle beauty with the horny 'Irie' and minimal stepper 'Dub Island'. Meanwhile, the Digital Mystikz allow the superb percussive experiment of 'I Wait' to massage the airwaves, but leave me slightly cold with 'Guilty'. Tayo & Acid Rockers Uptown, King Midas Sound, Kode 9 and Scuba, amongst others, all bring depth to a collection of tracks chosen for their ability to outlast the biggest club banger of the moment.



Trimbal
Soulfood Vol. 1
Soulfood

Although it's not dubstep, Trim's new mix CD is so good that I had to include it here; it's all garage after all. Long time member of Roll Deep, Trim has often been overlooked, hidden by the shadows of Dizzee and Wiley. With this, the first in the series of his Soulfood mix CDs, Trim steps into the spotlight and then some. His truly unique flow is combined with fantastic wordplay that is, at once, articulate and hilarious, and, at times, scarily dark. This is true street poetry. The most exciting grime project released this year by a long way, and, yes, I'm aware that Wiley and Dizzee have just put albums out.

Shackleton, Appleblim & Gatekeeper
Soundboy Punishments
Skull Disco

This magnificently packaged treasure trove is an example of music in its purist form. Brutal, delicate and engaging all at the same time, the listener is taken on a journey through a desolate landscape, forever chasing echoes into the deep. The first CD is made up of the label's stunning back catalogue, which alone makes this an essential purchase, especially if you have missed out on the vinyl releases. The second CD rounds up Shackleton's work on other labels and also gives us some previously unreleased tracks to salivate over. Also included is the Villalobos mix of 'Blood On My Hands', which, at 18 minutes, is as epic as it is brilliant. If only all music was this good.

Marlow / Sno
Tremors / 25 Stone
Boka

With twelve releases in the bag for Boka, there is still little sign of the quality letting up. Having dropped reputable twelves on both Terrain and Earwax, Manchester's Sno gets a further outing here, sharing a plate with Marlow. '25 Stone' is devastatingly simple; thumping kicks, a Rastafarian chant and a sub line that will rattle the fillings right out of your mouth. Fans of Pinch and Loefah's bass and kick minimalism will lap this. In contrast, the flip is a melodic symphony. Exuberantly thick and murky strings, a distorted reggae chop and solid drums all build to a cinematic crescendo. This track further cements Marlow as a producer never afraid to explore tension and melody in expansive ways.

Skream & Cluekid / Skream
Sand Snake / Moving Snares
Disfigured Dubs

Arguably the biggest name in dubstep and probably the most prolific producer too, Skream provides a more personal outlet for his creative genius on his own label. Moving snares hurtle along at breakneck speed while strong techno textures, buzz-saw effects and a driving, insistent synthesized melody demonstrate why dubstep is the most intense, exciting music around at the moment. On 'Sand Snake', Skream teams up with in demand producer, Cluekid, better known for his collabs with Cotti and their -30 label. A consistent fixture on his Rinse FM show, the track has a cheeky flute-esque melody with tough riffle shot snares that lead into a dutty bass grind that refuses to be pinned to one motif. Miss it at your peril.

Nyabingi
Belgium Chocolates / Cannibal Run
Hotflush

Not much is known about this new producer and credit to Paul Scuba for bringing fresh talent through when so many other established labels are still plugging the same names release after release. Distinctive, stretched strings open 'Belgium Chocolates', firmly setting the stylistic template and providing the bulk of the melodic theme, whilst a host of glitchy, filtered grunt 'n' bass subsonics rumble underneath. 'Cannibal Run' kicks a little harder, introducing chest-breaking subs that drag you further and further into the lower depth of the Hz range, coloured by sinister ghost voices, system malfunctions and a disturbing string line. Another excellent 12" from Hotflush that sits as comfortably at home on the headphones as it does on the rig.

Distance & Skream / Distance
Political Warfare / Radical
Chestplate

For a man never truly aligned to one label, it was only a matter of time until South London's Distance scraped his pennies together and created his own imprint. Drawing heavily from dubstep's unique terminology, Chestplate - referring to the effect that deep sub bass has on your upper body area - opens with two cuts from the man himself. 'Political Warfare', produced in conjunction with Skream, is as brilliant a track as you'd expect from these two masters, with a lilting guitar lick running like a ribbon, pinning itself to a solid sub workout. Distance flies solo on 'Radical', showcasing his expertise at sub science whilst drawing out an oscillating, filtered hook that groans and fluctuates with raw tension.

Tes La Rock
Round The World Girls / Ignition
Argon

Hot on the heels of Matty G's awesome '50,000 Watts', comes a tune so right for the summertime that it should come with its own suntan lotion and BBQ. A faithful cover of Florida's up and coming reggae crooner, Uncle Sam, Tes strips it back to a reverb-heavy guitar lick and simple synth touches, keeping the roots, but letting the vocal breathe and the sick bassline bump and bounce. 'Ignition' finds our Swedish friend back on familiar turf; big techy flourishes, industrial strength percussion, and a driving, constantly building energy. This is a veritable roller by Tes' standard and nice to hear him pushing his style in different directions. Another must buy release from US champions Argon.

Headhunter
Futurebound / Descent / Entity
Tempa

Bristol based Headhunter gets his first solo release on the mighty Tempa and delivers three tracks of dark, brooding half-step that are designed to pummel the listener into dance floor oblivion. First up is 'Futurebound', a sparse, apocalyptic monster of a tune with a bassline that writhes its way carnivorously around the bare carcass of a drum track. The B side is comprised of 'Descent' and 'Entity'. 'Entity' is the real gem of the EP, lurking menacingly in the shadows at the end. Strained, horror film pads hang tensely in the air above precise rolling percussion and a deep sub bass that engulfs the world around it. Dread has never sounded so funky.

2nd II None
Deep Trouble EP
Heavy Artillery

Heavy Artillery comes out all guns blazing for its second release with what could well turn out to be one of this year's stand out twelves. 2nd II None, who has previously released on Road and A.R.M.Y, lays down four fantastically varied tracks, which show the real diversity of the garage genre. The stand out track is the magnificent 'Waterfalls', which has been causing feverish excitement amongst dubstep and techno heads alike. Dripping with thick, electronic dub textures, the track is the latest foray into the territory being explored by Pinch, Appleblim and Peverelist. The other three tracks on the EP cover everything from two-step to bouncy bassline 4/4 that will have any dance floor bubbling.

Ramadanman
Good Feelings / The Woon
2nd Drop

Riding a wave of success following the first release on his own label, Hessle Audio, and his recent release on Deapoh's Bare Dubs imprint, Ramadanman drops a 12" of fresh vocal dubstep on new label, 2nd Drop. The A side, 'Good Feelings', samples Nina Simone's 'Feeling Good' to great effect. The vocal sounds raw and compellingly primal when laid over a foundation of true earthquake bass. As it approaches a climax, the track begins to roll out, propelled ever forward by smooth, rolling kick drums. The flip sees Ramadanman remixing Jamie Woon's 'Wayfaring Stranger'. Whilst the track is strong it fails to reach the heights of Burial's electrifying remix.

Djunya
Contact / Uprise
Mode

Bristol based Mode goes international with its third release, welcoming American producer Djunya to the fold. The A side, 'Contact', sees him flexing his impressive production skills to create a bouncy, bass-driven descent into dance floor destruction. Classically offbeat chords give the track a dubby feel, whilst menacing bass warbles are lavishly tossed around between a variety of fierce, synthesised basslines. The flip sees the arrival of the epic 'Uprise'. Hell's own choir is joined by bursts of heavily filtered amen breaks and the seemingly compulsory LFO bassline that belies so much of Dubstep these days. Following his recent release on Juju's Narco Hz label, this 12" further cements Djunya's position within the Dubstep scene. Definitely one to watch.

Reviews by Jeryl DOA, Jesse Keene, Chris G, Laurent Fintoni, Lucas Buck, Markle, Phoenix, Mark OD and Danny Shutdown

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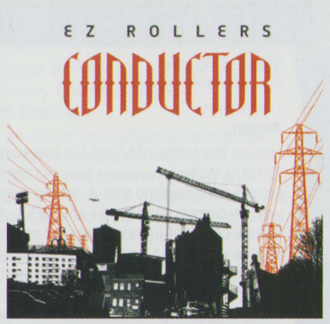
Calibre
Shelf Life
Signature

There aren't many artists that have a veritable vault of back dated and in demand tracks, but Calibre is an exception to the rule. None of the tracks on his 'Shelf Life' compilation tracks have ever been played onto plastic and have only been played by a select few lucky enough to have been given them on plate or, more recently, CDR. 'Venus & Mars' seems to be the track everyone's purring about and with good reason too, but it's his remix of Klute's Hospital classic, 'Part Of Me', that really catches the ear. Not many would or could try to remix such a tune, but he does it with ease. Quality stuff! 'Acrobat' is another track that everyone's waiting for, being the kind of tune that epitomises seminal nights such as Speed, and 'Easy On My Mind' furthers that cause with its funky swinging bassline. 'Re-entry' has a more sinister feel to it and will turn heads, while 'Peace Of Mind' is quite simply classic Calibre. But who am I to tell you which tracks stand out? What I can say though is that Dominic Martin will go down in drum and bass history as one of its legendary producers. Consistent and prodigiously talented, this compilation acts as a testament to his unique style. This is a great album that everyone, regardless of music tastes, should go out and buy.

Various Artists
15 Tracks From 15 Years
Ram Records

Not many D&B labels can claim to have been at the top of their game for 15 years, but Ram are certainly one of the minority that share this accolade. '15 Tracks From 15 Years' is a simple concept - stick a collection of their biggest anthems in a rather neat order that shows the progression the label has made throughout the last decade and a half - and what a wicked concept it is too. Of course Ram's back catalogue pretty much speaks for itself and so does the tracklisting of this CD; 'Valley Of The Shadows', 'Roll On', 'Sound Control', 'Truly One', 'Quest', 'Lunar Bass', 'Sound In Motion', 'The Beginning', 'Titan', 'Bodyrock', 'Chilli Pepper', 'Signal', 'Strobe', 'X Ray' and 'Façade', make for a roller coaster lesson in drum and bass history. Veterans will know exactly what these tunes sound like, but for the multitude of newcomers to the scene, this acts as a valuable history lesson as every track's a classic, and at a budget £6 CD (also accompanied by a clear vinyl repress series), no one has any excuses not to recognise 'The Beginning' the next time a DJ brings it into the mix. The only gripe that I have about this whole affair is some missing favourites. Where's 'Turbulence? Where's 'No Reality'? Where's 'Cause N Effect'? If you're reading this Andy, I'm calling for a '15 Years' Part 2 already!

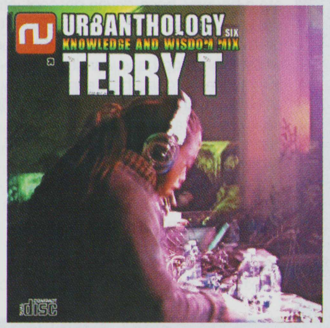


EZ Rollers
Conductor
Intercom

With a top 20 hit and some of the mid '90s best loved jazzy D&B classics, such as 'Tough At The Top', 'RS 2000' and the aforementioned chart topping 'Walk This Land' under your belt, you'd be forgiven for sitting back and enjoying the good life. No such tomfoolery for the EZ Rollers, however, as they're back with their fourth artist album and a brand new live act ready to rock the crowd with their fresh selection of blazing beats. Zane Lowe's favourite sample hits hard in the form of 'Crowd Rocker', while 'Coming Home' strikes the other end of the EZ spectrum with a deep saxophone and flute combination that LTJ Bukem is hailing as "a timeless classic". Both of these efforts go some way to proving the Rollers' diversity and tracks such as 'Haze' (the live act's opening track) and 'Revolutionize' (a dirty hip hop number featuring Messy MC and The Lady Roller on vocals) reinforce that design. With 15 tracks spread across the CD and with such a range of different tracks on 'Conductor', it's sure to be said there's something for everyone on the album, and it's certainly the EZ Roller's best work in recent years. However, I can't help feeling there's something missing from their productions that leave me wanting just a little bit more.

Nu:Tone
Back Of Beyond
Hospital

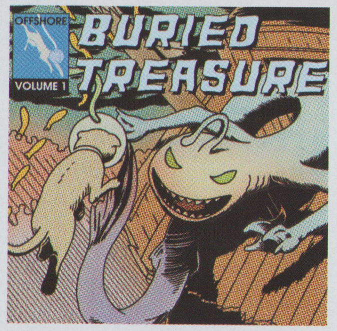
Although 'Brave Nu World' received mixed reviews, I confess I enjoyed Nu:Tone's first album. I wasn't convinced his second would be up to much, but the king of fast soul has proved he's got more than just the one LP up his sleeve. 'Back Of Beyond' is 13 tracks of laid back, summery jazz 'n' bass with balls; some cleanly instrumental, some warm and soothing vocal led. You may already have heard 'System' featuring the belting vocals of Natalie Williams, a track that's almost guaranteed to be the festival sunrise choice. Ernesto, Commix, Talc and "Hudderfield's own" Pat Fulgoni also put in guest appearances, while Logistics turns up to twiddle knobs and add swarming electricity to 'Say Hello, Wave Goodbye' and 'Never Together' (two of the album's strongest tracks). The sci-fi bleeps and whistles of the enjoyable 'Missing Link' sound like Nu:Tone's managed to get MC R2D2 on the mic, and, although the rising horns call to mind High Contrast (on more than just one occasion), that's no bad thing in my mind. If you're after something incredible and innovative - something that'll blow your mind in the same way as seeing your mate's sister getting changed when you were 14 - this album ain't for you. But if you're just after some bright and breezy broken beats, this is the perfect summer soundtrack.



Various Artists
Urbanthology Volume 6: Knowledge & Wisdom
Urbanthology

During the '90s, Knowledge & Wisdom became a label renowned for releasing dance floor drum and bass with specially recorded reggae, ragga and R&B vocals from some of the best artists around. Affiliated with the legendary Congo Natty crew and owned by Terry T, Knowledge & Wisdom's back catalogue has become hot property with the popularity of their sound never waning across the last decade. To that end, Urbanthology have taken it upon themselves to gather up a bunch of K&W's best bits and enlist Terry T himself to mix them up for your aural pleasure. It's clear to see that the line up of artists on vocal duties will get any self-respecting ragga jungle fan coughing their rice and peas up in a fit of excitement. Names familiar to the masses such as Million Dan, Junior Reid and Demolition Man mingle with artists such as Bobby Blue, Little T, Mercilus, Sugar Minot, Marlon Stewart, Kaloni, Terry Ganzie, Little Clarke and Frisky Dan, creating a list of vocals that will appeal to the diehards as well as the passing fan. Particular favourites include the aforementioned Junior Reid with 'One Blood', the bassbin testing 'Paparazzi' and the multi MC aplomb of 'Our Flows'. Simply, if you like ragga jungle, buy it!

album reviews



Various Artists
Buried Treasure Volume 1
Offshore

Too much of today's Drum & Bass sounds the same. Why is that? There are so many places to put a kick and snare drum within a 4-bar loop, an infinite library of audio sources to sample from, and a ridiculous amount of plug-ins available for close to nothing that allow producers to be truly inventive with their use of effects to create novel sounds. Offshore is a label that stands firmly against the homogenisation of drum and bass and releases music by artists such as those featured on this excellent budget priced compilation who treat the music's currently rigid sonic, musical and structural framework as something to be adhered to very loosely. The twisted beats of Graphic & Slide's 'Crash Kit', the progressive Virus vibes of debutant Raychem's 'Time For What?', the beautiful harmonics of ASC's 'Fragments', the schizophrenic tomfoolery of Martsman's 'Marksman' and Sileni's whacked out VIP of Offshore anthem 'Twitchy Droid Leg', all demonstrate that there's still unexplored terrain left to discover and there are still producers willing to breathe new life into 170bpm compositions. And, to top it off, the package is beautifully presented and complete with a custom drawn comic strip by Offshore's aesthetic mastermind, CEDE. It's good to know there are still people that care out there.

Wiley
Playtime Is Over
Big Dada

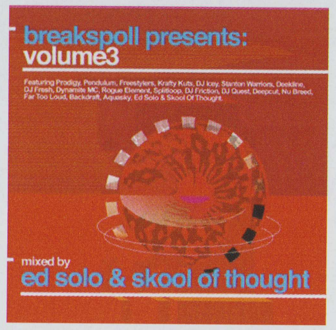
After his previous full length outings into more commercial territory ('Treddin' On Thin Ice' and Roll Deep's 'In At The Deep End'), Wiley is given the opportunity to release an album that truly represents his sound. This is straight up grime, the Wiley way. For those who are new to the world of Wiley, 'Playtime Is Over' will be the perfect introduction to the world of Eskibeat. From the straight up, club banging, in your face attitude of 'Gangsters', '50/50' and 'Bow E3', through to the emotional (if a little boring) 'Letter To Dizzee' and 'Come Lay With Me', this album allows Wiley to fully display his versatility. For hardened Wiley fans, the album may be a little disappointing, however, as much of it will already be familiar. Many of the tracks have already appeared on either the 'Tunnel Vision' mix CDs or on his previous album 'Da 2nd Phaze', which, to be fair, saw little in the way of distribution. Whilst Wiley is still streets ahead of most of the competition, it feels as though he hasn't quite reached his potential with this album, failing to live up to the high standards he has set for himself. To his credit though, 'Playtime Is Over' is the first true grime album and for that Wiley must be applauded.

Skrien
The Eat Up
Dented

Welcome one and all to the world of North London lyricist Skrien. 'The Eat Up' is one of two albums that this industrious individual has in the pipeline. To start with, the roll call of guest artists is heavy, featuring Plan B, Foreign Beggars, Stig Of The Dump, Farma G and Verb T, to name but a few. The whole affair flows like a mixtape, giving that nostalgic feel of days past where beats and lyricism reigned supreme, which really gives 'The Eat Up' the edge over the competition. Skrein's lyrics are slightly twisted, but well thought out, while his delivery holds your attention like a pair of Double Ds on a midget. The beats comprise of a few known dubs from artists such as MF Doom, all cut up and pasted together with the help of Jabba Tha Kut, DJ Skully and DJ IQ, again adding to the overall feel of the album. Plus there are some real gems in there when it comes to skits, namely 'Crazy Tone'; check it out to see what I mean. This is a proper slice of hip hop cake that covers all the bases, and, if this first outing is anything to go by, what's to come could well be even fatter. So the question is: does that sound enticing enough to get you to 'The Eat Up'?

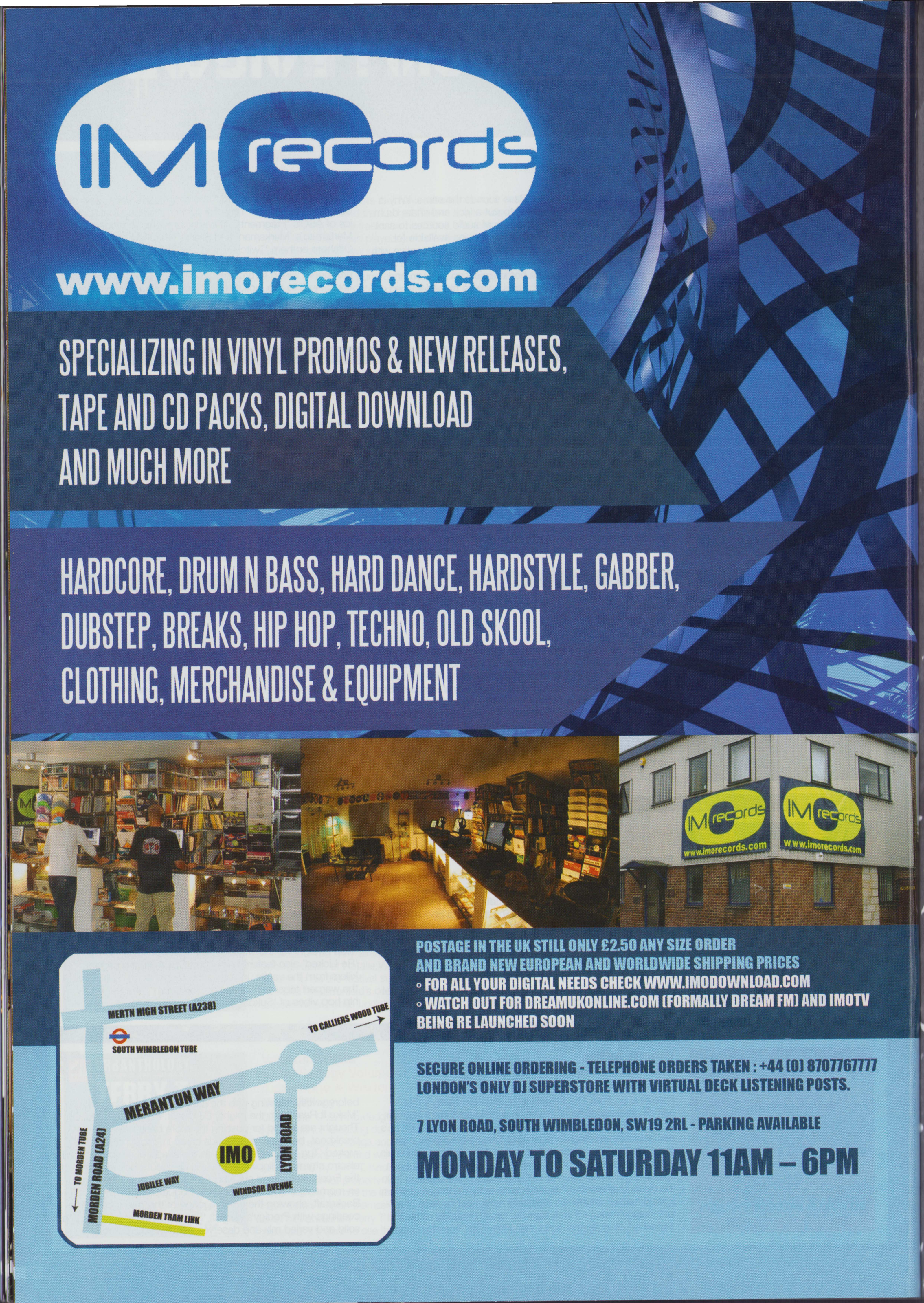
Soul Of Man
Re-Licked
Finger Lickin'

With a vast back catalogue of original dance floor burners that have rocked clubs across the world over the past few years, Soul Of Man are a production duo famed for their twisted funk style of breakbeat. Being the head honchos of Finger Lickin', time behind the mixing boards has been put on hold, so the Soul Of Man chaps saw fit to recruit the finest knob tweakers money can buy to give their past works the remix treatment. From the bass-drenched Groove Diggerz reworking of 'The Drum', through to the hip hop infused A Skillz shake up of 'Between The Eyes', variety is the name of the game on 'Re-Licked'. The track list reads like a who's who in breakbeat, with Def Inc, Brothers Bud, Trouble Soup, Merka and Deepcut all throwing in their ten cents. Stand out reworkings are a plenty with Merka stamping his individual jungle-infused sound on 'Gonna Keep On', and Kraak & Smaak's two rejigs of 'Sukdat' really shining through. For those of you who require a bit more of a house-led groove, head straight for the Trouble Soup remix of 'Dirty Waltzer'. 'Re-Licked' also features a second CD, featuring original killers from the vaults, including the ragga-laced 'Killa Brew', the warped tribal percussion of 'The Drum', and the freaky hip hop vibes of 'Sukdat'.



Various Artists
Breakspoll Volume 3
Supercharged

Following on from The Breakfasterz and Freq Nasty's mix comps, Breakspoll hand the baton over to Brighton's number one bassbin shakers, Ed Solo & Skool Of Thought. When he's not busy running Brighton's longest running breakbeat night, Skool Of Thought keeps things in line at the Against The Grain and Supercharged imprints. Alongside Ed Solo, they've been unleashing a raft of twelves in the run up to their debut LP. On the Breakspoll mix they've really gone to town, throwing down a shed load of exclusives alongside recent dance floor beasties. Kicking things off with their low down and dirty remix of 'Painkiller', they flip the script with 'Raw Shit' from Nu Breed, before swiftly following with the rough and tough vibes of 'Make It Real' from the mighty DJ Quest. Ed Solo & Skool Of Thought are famed for pushing the more bass-heavy side of breakbeat, but here new sounds creep in, most notably the wicked 'Tug Nut', which takes on the shape of an acid soaked electro stormer. Clipping its heels is Deepcut's bouncing refit of the Freestylers' stand out album track 'Electrified'. Other golden moments come from Splitloop, Rogue Element and Backdraft, showing the eclectic range of this mix. Closing proceedings with Prodigy's classic, 'Smack My Bitch Up', this is a solid and varied mix and deserves a slot in your collection.



game reviews

Compiled by: Ben Holdtight

NEWS

Halo 3 Beta

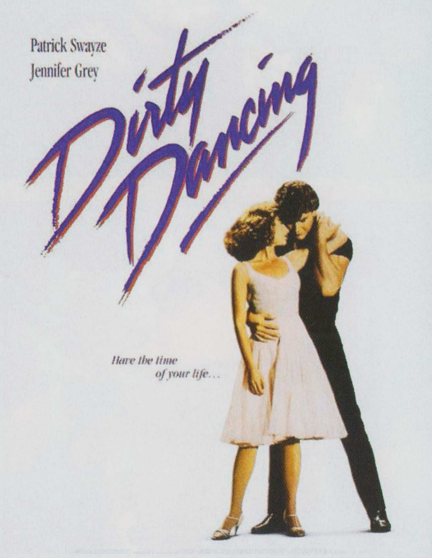
The Halo 3 Beta trial online sessions came and went, and despite being a bit of a slow start with the launch getting pretty messed up, a hell of a lot of games were played. With just 3 maps available it all got a bit samey quite quickly but the gameplay and new weapons definitely made it interesting. Personally I was expecting a bit more in the way of improvements: the graphics are better but still not in the same league as Gears Of War. The game play is definitely smoother and more responsive, particularly with the long-range weapons, and the new maps are well thought out. Lots of small improvements have been made but all in all it was a slightly disappointing preview of the sequel to the most popular game of all time. I reckon we'll still be playing it by the time it drops on September 26th, so it can't be that bad.

Need For Speed ProStreet

Yet another edition from EA's Need For Speed franchise has been announced recently for 360, Wii, DS, PSP and PS3. Allegedly taking a slightly different tack from previous editions, focusing heavily on online multiplayer competition, it could be just what the series needs. Executive Producer Larry LaPierre had this to say about it: "This is a game about building the ultimate performance-tuned battle machine, taking it to multidisciplinary showdowns all over the world and pitting your skills and reputation against the very best street racers."

Medal Of Honour: Airborne

The latest instalment of EA's critically acclaimed Medal Of Honour series is due to land in Europe on 31st August and the hype machine has gone into overdrive. From what we've seen it looks surprisingly similar to Call Of Duty 3 but with some aerial bits thrown in. However EA are claiming big things, saying it's "the first WWII game that allows the player to land anywhere and truly fight the way they want to." And Neil Young, the general manager of developers EA Los Angeles, says, "Medal Of Honour: Airborne is a new direction for the franchise, introducing innovations that redefine the series as well as impacting the FPS genre as a whole." Hype or waffle? We'll have to wait and see.



Dirty Dancing: The Game

No, seriously, it's true. Codemasters have developed a Dirty Dancing game to coincide with the 20th anniversary of one of the world's most popular chick flicks. Slated as an action-puzzle game, you get the chance to learn to bust moves Swayze style and experience the life of Baby. Bizarre, but true.

REVIEWS

DARK KINGDOM (PS3)

There's not a huge amount of choice right now for the PS3, and Dark Kingdom is one of those titles you wouldn't necessarily spare much thought were there a decent amount of titles available at the moment. Probably best described as Golden Axe for 2007, it's a genuine arcade style hack 'n' slash with a few small RPG elements thrown in. In very much a similar vein to Marvel Superheroes, it has a number of upgradeable special moves; it also has the added feature of upgradeable weapons. However there are only three characters to choose from compared to the 20 or so in Marvel, and Marvel also has 4-player simultaneous action, which is a real plus. Dark Kingdom is a huge game and seemingly lasts forever, so if you fancy pairing up with a friend and blitzing up some bad guys then this is definitely enjoyable. I think this game is ok; however this is mainly due to the general lack of quality games on the PS3. In fairness you're probably better buying Marvel, but if you like a bit of straightforward hack 'n' slash then go for it.

COMMAND & CONQUER 3 (XBOX 360)

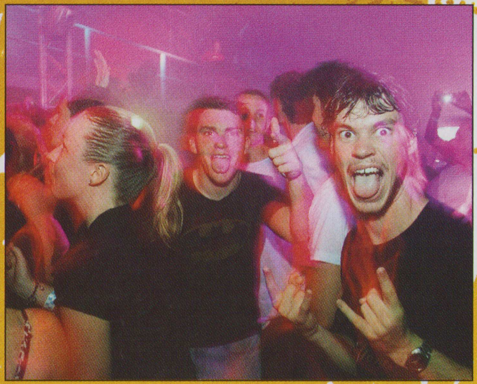
The classic real time strategy game is back and it's bigger and better than ever. If you haven't had your head buried in the sand for the last 10 years you should have heard of Command & Conquer as it is the consummate RTS game. This latest edition brings a super futuristic flavour with numerous high tech weapons and options at each team's disposal. What sets this apart from Lord Of The Rings and other RTS titles is the sheer number of combatants that can be on screen at any one time: it's truly unbelievable how much action can be going on at any one time. It's not the most imaginative of sequels but it offers so much more in terms of the varying tactics you can employ to try and win a battle, with lots of options, upgrades and special powers to choose from. Also, there aren't many games around with full motion video cut scenes. With all these high-end animations around it seemed that FMV had been forgotten, but not in C&C3 where it is full of very cheesy but still quality story-building cut scenes. I would have to say, all things considered, this is the best real time strategy game out there for 360 right now, with a great campaign and quality online multiplayer set up. So if you like some strategy action then go buy it immediately.

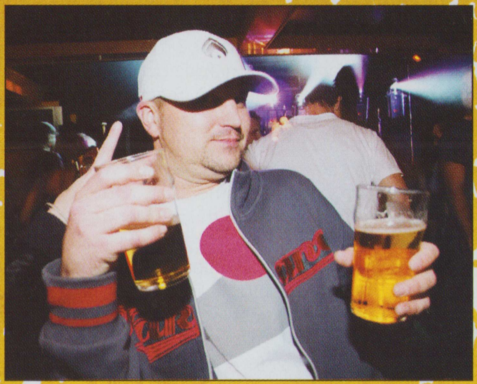
SHADOWRUN (XBOX 360)

This is a first in console gaming as this is a cross platform title, where Windows Vista players and 360 gamers can play against each other online. Hopefully it will be the shape of things to come, as it would be great to see some truly huge games or even teams of players from different machines taking each other on. Anyway, this is a mainly online orientated first person shooter that has the unusual blend of magic and guns. The gameplay is slightly reminiscent of Unreal Tournament but with a lot more to offer in terms of choice of weapons and use of special powers. You can also choose different classes of characters with different skills and abilities. This wide variety allows for different winning strategies, particularly when playing as a team online, where complimentary skills, weapons and magic can be combined to make your team unbeatable. The graphics are also very good and animation very smooth, and whilst taking few risks in this department it does put many games to shame with its slickness. We are still playing this one here at ATM HQ; so far we're very impressed and we're already slightly addicted to the online play. Definitely worth a look.

city scene

Words: Andrew Richardson Pics: Craig Hilton





PERTH

Fondly referred to as "the edge of the Earth", Perth, Australia, is one of the most isolated places on the planet. Due to its extreme distance from external influences - both national and international - Perth has long been left to stew in its own juices, and, as such, has been quietly cultivating a unique kind of Western culture.

Although it is a regional capital, Perth's population is a piddley 1.5 million people, and we're all spread out across an extensive and exponentially expanding urban sprawl. So, despite some nights in the past not getting the support you might expect from a city with a reputation for representing D&B like Perth, this was more to do with the relatively low number of locals and low density living conditions as opposed to a lack of love; just as there are apparently more millionaires per capita in Perth than in other places, so too number our junglists.

Recently though, the situation has been reversed, and mostly for the same reasons. Our idyllic little city is rather small and subsequently suffers from a lack of venues both available and suitable for our strong and sizeable scene. Up until around a year ago, Heat Nightclub had been the unofficial home of D&B, hosting Trafik gigs for years, before a nearby residential development, bureaucratic bullshit and incredibly bad management – not bad promotion - pretty much put a stake through its heart. This left some promoters with little choice other than to use venues that just weren't satisfactory, which became quite a thorn in the side of the scene. Predominately due to these difficulties and the Heat debacle, some consider 2006 as one of the worst years for D&B this end of Down Under. The longstanding and lauded Loaded Dice promotions were one organisation unaffected by these obstacles as they made good use of the massive mainstream venue The Deen and continue to do so.

Thankfully, one of the people to have helped put gigs on at Heat reclaimed control of the club so it's now back in business, but this time Huey is mostly leaving the promotion to other parties. Newcomer Naras Entertainment is one of these and they hired the club for their Makoto and Gridlok gigs. Naras have wasted no time in taking up the slack when it comes to tours. They have plenty of potential and, if all goes to plan, will become an important part of Perth's D&B party scene.

Another reason to get excited is that Enygma Generation, another events promotion crew that have been hibernating during the harsh [metaphoric] winter Perth has endured the past year or so, no longer slumbers. At the end of June they brought the incomparable Calyx & TeeBee to town for the highly anticipated 'Anatomy' album tour, and will also be busting Lifted Music label mates Spor and Ewun's Australian cherries in the coming months.

Other recent additions to the international promotions game include Inhibit, Leviathan and Forces Of Nature, who have so far been responsible for rinse outs from Phace, Bulletproof and Mindscape. Forces Of Nature and Inhibit are also active on a more local level, with the former being one of two crews (Calm Before The Storm being the other) to host monthly nights at the Velvet Lounge; the latter putting on parties regularly around the city. FoN and CBTS have also flown in DJs from interstate at various points in the past.

As for weekly gigs, Roller at the Rosemount Hotel is into its eighth year (!) and refuses to roll over. Reportedly the longest running weekly D&B night in the southern hemisphere, it has steadily supplied the scene with beats for so bloody long it deserves both recognition and respect. It even does its bit to bring through new blood by hosting the annual 'Roller Idol' competition, in which upcoming DJs gain exposure and experience with a chance to win both prizes and set slots.

Just as Thursday nights belong to Roller, Fridays belong to The Nine. Now based upstairs at Bar Open, it boasts a roster of residents that even non-Australian readers might know by name; Bad Robot (aka Phetsta and Rregula) and Shockone are the most accomplished artists so far, but Sardi and Muller have also had music signed. Not big enough to comfortably cater for the kind of crowds international acts attract, Bar Open fills to the gills almost every Friday, regardless of which residents happen to be on rotation that week. Meanwhile broken beats of a different variety can be found downstairs at Bar Open, with new night Blender bringing dubstep, funk, hip-hop, garage and breaks together in a smooth cocktail one Friday per month, while Saturdays see it become Bar Broken.

The bastion of breakbeat in Perth, Ambar nightclub, has managed to make it into DJ Magazine's Top 50 Clubs Of The World, which is an amazing achievement for what is basically a modest basement with a bar and sound system. Promotions crew Destination? do popular and novel things there once a month, and the roundly respected Micah (who also happens to co-host the busy Beatsuite on Friday nights at the Velvet Lounge) can often be found spinning things there as well. Strike 3 Productions are also in on the action by putting on nights like the fortnightly Breaking Point at Heat on Wednesday nights and co-promoting Bass Assault; not limiting themselves to any particular BPM.

Breaking down the boundaries between live acts, electronic musicians, visual artists and fashion designers is the domain of Deuce, who do so to make the live music scene more vibrant. Deuce also introduced the Jigsaw program to encourage new collaborations between electronic artists, vocalists, and instrumentalists, the sounds of which can be sampled on the two 'Jigsaw' CDs released to date.

As well as all this, and two brand new record labels in the shape of Wild West and Climate Recordings, Perth also possesses a wealth of wicked weed, women and weather. Boh Giggedy!

For more info check:
www.teknoscape.com.au/forums
www.perthdancemusicawards.org
www.myspace.com/psynic

world scene

Words & Pics: Dave Specialist

THAILAND

My first trip out here was in early 2002. I had never been to Asia before and from the minute I arrived, I was totally blown away. I came with a friend for about a month and we had the most incredible adventure in Bangkok and on the islands. I even brought a small bag of records with me and managed to get myself a few little gigs around Thailand at various bars & small clubs. There was a serious lack of any kind of developed club scene but my gut feeling told me that the place had the right kind of energy for something to kick off.

I went back to London, where my work was divided mainly between ATM and also with Clayton at TOV, plus I was promoting my own small parties. I'd also DJ whenever I had the chance and was lucky enough to land warm up gigs at the likes of Fabric, Movement, Pure Science and TOV events. I really enjoyed what I did and it just about got me by, but my trip to Thailand really opened my eyes up to the fact that there is a big world out there.

With two cases full of records, about 400 quid, the clothes I was wearing and a one-way ticket to Bangkok, I was all set. The scene in Bangkok when I arrived was very small. A local chap by the name of DJ Dragon had been doing his own parties for a while. Although it was mainly himself plus local DJs, Dragon had also hosted some well known UK names including Mickey Finn, DJ SS, Aphrodite & John B.

Dragon caught the D&B bug whilst studying abroad in Canada. He was - and still is - a lover of proper hip hop, but he loved the rawness of the jungle sound and was instantly hooked. Dragon returned to his native Thailand, eager to share his new found musical love with locals and thus laid the foundations of the scene here in Thailand. He introduced the sound to some locals including DJ Wen, who is to this day, his partner in Homebass Communications, their organisation for all things D&B. The duo have also presented a long running weekly radio show on one of Bangkok's most popular stations, Fat 104.5.

Over the last 2 years, Homebass have been focusing on bringing in Asian D&B artists from surrounding countries. Their Azia Bass series has featured D&B ambassadors from Japan (DJ DX - Eastside), Singapore (Kiat - Metalheadz & DJ Vortex), Hong Kong (Cookie & JC - Magnetic Soul), Indonesia (Jerome & DFMC - Javabass) & Malaysia (DJ Low - Loops Collective). Dragon is now weekly resident at Club Culture, a newly opened venue in town. He plays at their weekly Bass Junkies party every Thursday.

Jazzbah Records is a store based in Siam Square - Bangkok's downtown shopping area. As well as running this excellent record / DJ equipment store, the owner, Natty, also DJs and promotes his own D&B parties with the help of Pichy, a local female DJ. Although they like all styles of D&B, Natty & Pichy prefer the more liquid sound of D&B - this is obvious when they DJ and also when they do their own parties. Jazzbah have brought the likes of DJ Zinc, Nu Tone, Logistics, Cyantific, EZ Rollers & Ray Keith to Bangkok for some excellent parties.

Vertigo Productions is my baby. Before I was doing big parties, I played at a lot of clubs around town. They differed enormously - I used to do a weekly night at the city's most famous upscale club - Bed - every Thursday and then at a dirty little sweatbox down a back alley called DDM on Fridays. It was quite a contrast playing more accessible, vocal kind of stuff on Thursdays to a crowd of models and schmoozers one night then playing much heavier jump up stuff to a crowd of absolute scumbags the next.

I had always wanted to start bring international DJ's, I was into over here, but up until early 2005 I didn't feel the time was right. There were no quality internationals (of any genre) passing through Bangkok and I, like many others, was getting pretty bored.

Japanese DJ/Producer Makoto was a good friend of mine and was keen to come out to Thailand. I brought him and Deeizm MC over to do 2 gigs - one at Bed and one at a new, more underground style venue called Astra. I could not have picked a better first choice, Makoto & Deeizm rocked both parties and have been favourites in Bangkok ever since - they have been 5 times in total and it's always a magic night.

Since then I have brought most of my favourite D&B DJs as well as those I consider the best in other genres. Goldie, Marky & Craze are all regulars. Fresh has been out with Shimon for the last 2 years running. As well as these I have had the likes of Klute, Storm, A Sides, Shy FX, Marcus Intalex, Jenna G & Mosus, Stamina MC, Doc Scott and many others - Fabio is coming in July and it's his first time so everyone is really looking forward to that.

There is not so much a D&B scene here as there is an electronic music scene. You tend to get a lot of the same crowd going to all the big parties, regardless of genre. This is something I really like as it tends to keep peoples ears open - it's way too easy in the UK to get stuck into just one genre. Surprisingly enough, being in Bangkok has actually opened my ears up more to the likes of house & techno; over the last few months I have brought Laurent Garnier, Timo Maas, Darren Emerson and Claude Von Stroke - all of which were great parties.

The one problem we have in Bangkok is the closing time. We have to shut at 2am, but there are after hours places which can go until later... although I cannot guarantee much in terms of quality music!

I am opening my own club here later in the year - it will be on RCA (Royal City Avenue, the most well known strip of clubs/bars in Bangkok) and it will be called 808. It's a 1200 capacity venue and the sound is being done by a guy who is widely considered to be the best club sound man in the world. The interior is being done by a guy who has previously worked on some of Asia's best 5 star hotels, top clubs and even the Louis Vuitton shop in Dubai! We will have big name D&B DJ's twice a month on Fridays.

Online Links:
www.bangkokrecorder.com
www.myspace.com/vertigobkk
www.jazzbahrecords.com
www.homebasscommu.com
www.bedsupperclub.com
www.qbarbangkok.com

DJ OF THE MONTH

Name: Phase 2
Based: Birmingham
DJ Style: Deep & dark, rolling funk.
Favourite DJs: Doc Scott, Lee, Pace, Vicious Circle, Surgeon (Techno).
What makes a good DJ? Tune selection, overall flow of the set, tailoring your style to the crowd and what time you're on. I like DJs who try different things within their set, DJs who make new tunes with just turntables.
Why should you book me: I love seeing what the scene is like in different cities, continents, towns, wherever!!
Hit Me Up: AIM: phase2brknmnds, MSN: brokenjoe@hotmail.com

BABE OF THE MONTH

Name: Poppy Holliday.
Age: 21
Club Spotted: Metropolis tent at Gatecrasher Summer Sound System.
Status: Single.
Who smashed it? Defo Andy C.
Favourite DJ: Andy C!
Favourite MC: Eksman.
Favourite club night: All about raves, especially ones with a mixture of styles.
Funniest thing about tonight: Getting called G.I. Jane- loved it!
Tell us something about yourself: My boobs are fake ha-ha!
Time to get ready to go out? 3 hours!
What do you think of ATM? It's ghetto!

WEEKLY EVENTS

MOVEMENT @ BAR RUMBA, 36 Shaftsbury Avenue, London, W1. Every Thursday. 9pm-3.30am. £6. Info: 020 7735 7577. D&B. Residents Ray Keith, Ruffstuff, Brian Gee Plus guests on rotation.

SWERVE @ THE END, West Central Street, London WC1. 22.30pm-3am. £5NUS/£6. Every Wednesday. D&B / Liquid Funk with Fabio. Bailey, Flight plus guests each week.

GRACE @ HERBAL, Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London. Every Sunday. 9pm-2am. Ladies free b4 11.30pm/£5. Gents £6/£8, Students £5. Upfront D&B with Grooverider plus special guests each week.

JUNGLIST ALLIANCE PRESENTS: BASS BAR @ DQ / THE LATE BAR, Every Thursday. Fitzwilliam Street, Sheffield. Every week with guest DJ's / MC's local and international. 9pm-3am. Entry £3.

SPIT KINGDOM @HERBAL, 10-14 Kingsland Road, E2 8DA. 9pm – 2am. Hip Hop every Tuesday. www.herbaluk.com / www.spitkingdom.com. Hook up with SKHQ residents The Mixologists @ myspace.com/mixologists.

CHEEKY MONDAY @ WINSTON AMSTERDAM, Winston Kingdom, Warmoesstraat, Centrum, Amsterdam. 10-4 every monday! 5 Euro on the door. www.cheekymonday.com. Residents adi-j, loco, sinistah, kaper, and mc lenny len + special guest djs from the international dnb and jungle scene.

JULY LISTINGS

FRIDAY 6TH JULY

RAM RECORDS @ THE END, West Central Street, London. 10-6. £15 / £13 Nus / Advance Tickets (£13) Available From Www.Endclub.Com Call 08700 600 100 - Fully Licensed Bar Until Close. Main Room: Andy C (2 Hour Set), Pendulum, Dj Hype, Sub Focus, Red One, Shimon, Moving Fusion, Xample. Mcs: Gq, Dynamite Mc, Mc Verse, Fats. Lounge: Chase & Status (Breaks Set), Kenny Ken (Old Skool Set), Jay Cunning, Neil Mitchell.

SHOGUN @ AUDIO, 10 Marine Parade, Brighton. 11-4. £8 Before 12 /£10 After/ £7 NUS. 01273606906 / shogunaudio.co.uk. DJ Zinc (2hrs) Alix Perez, SpectraSoul, DLM. Hosted by SP:MC & I.D.

INTERFACE @ RED, Friargate, Derby. 10-4. £8 / £10. www.myspace.com/interfacederby. Pendulum & MC Jakes, Bassline Smith, Drumsound, MC's Biggie & Youngman.

FIZZY FRIDAY @ OH BAR!, 111 - 113, Camden Highstreet, NW1, London. 8pm - 4am. Free entry before 9 - £3 before 11 - more after. 07841 465186 / www.fizzyliquid.com / www.myspace.com/fizzyliquid. D Bridge, Redeyes, Insight, Mr Joseph, Caspar, Dimensions and Izzy. MC's: Stamina, Deefa, V double E, Cliche, Rinsa and Keeno.

SATURDAY 7TH JULY

PING PONG @ THE JUNCTION, cambridge cb17gx. 10 - 4 AM. £6 adv[nus], £8 adv, £8 door [nus], £10 door. www.junction.co.uk / www.myspace.com/pingpongparties. 01223511511. Scratch perverts, mampi swift, zinc, faith sfx, beat box fozzy, micky finn, kye vs sugai vs margaret scratcher, skibadee, hosted by johnny kash, vj scratch video.

THURSDAY 12TH JULY

DSM PRESENTS @ BOHEMIA, 1a Imperial Square, Cheltenham, Glos, GL50 1PT. 9-3. £3. stumasta@go-deep.co.uk & www.go-deep.co.uk. LSB & Samas with Manikular. Residents; Donovan Smith, Subsurface, Subverse, Ben-E & Stumasta.

FRIDAY 13TH JULY

ESSENCE OF CHI MEETS CARBON @ VOLKS, Madeira Drive, Brighton. 10pm-5am. £5 b4 11pm, £7 after. £5 NUS. 07817 706484. www.essenceofchi.co.uk. Room1: Kane, A.I, Chris Su, Insight, Subterra & DLM, Healing Crew, Roadrunner, MC Ken Mac, MC Five Alive, Bassline MC, MC Sky. Room 2: Mel De'Vil, T1, Subterra, J Rolla, J Funk.

STIMULUS @ SMACK, 5-9 Tavistock Street, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PJ. 10.30-3. £6. www.myspace.com/stimulusdnb / 01926 422223. Dillinja, Brookes Bros, Danny Byrd, Rascal, Samas, MC Algar, MC PM.

NAKEDBEATZ MEETS 1LOVE @ BRIXTON JAMM, 9-6. Room 1: Nicky Blackmarket, Ruffstuff, Funky Flirt, Jordan V, Tantrum Desire, Rhythm Beater, Sib, Smoove, Dollface, Probert, Kontact. Mc's: Fun, Deemas J, Chronic Insommniac. Markit, Narks, Livewire, Charmer, Greena, Kerky. Room 2 - Electro / Funky / Old Skool House / Old Skool Hardcore. Huckleberry Finn, Rob Blake, Dj Trix, Wayne Eldridge, T-Delight, Dr Roberts, M Groove, Dj Skie. Hosted By Mc Deemas J.

SATURDAY 14TH JULY

BUST THE BOX PRESENTS ITS A RAVE! @ VOLKS, Madeira Drive, Brighton. Citizen K, Sonic Boo, The scapegoat, DJ Nothing, Class DJ. Students pay more. Dress: Bells and whistles. myspace.com/bustthebox

BACK 2 DRUM & BASICS @ THE FUNKTION ROOMS, 2A-2B Pevensey Road,Eastbourne,East Sussex BN21 3HJ. 10pm-3am. £6 on the door. www.future-drumz.com. Majistrate, G-Type, Lyptikal, DC, Trial & Error, Sensa, DJ Snear. MC's Evil B, Spooka, Flyte, Fleximus, Felon, Ninja, Dominator, Hektic.

CONTAGIOUS 2ND BIRTHDAY BASH @ THE EDGE, Park Street, Luton, LU1 3EY. 9pm-4am. £10 on the door. Last entry 1am. 07716 508834 / 07900 211874. myspace.com/contagiousuk. Arena 1: Twisted Individual, Ruffstuff, Funky Flirt, Hoodlum, Bluenote B2B Karizma, SM, D Dark, Ragga Twins, Herbzie, Krayz-B, Phantom, A.K, D.S.P, Lydon. Arena 2: 94-04: Cool Hand Flex, 2 Rude & Mark S, Marky Rush b2b Redin, Slyde, Flawless, Turbo, Funktion, Johnny Ka$h, Markit MC, Mr Sensi.

WEDNESDAY 18TH JULY

THERAPY SESSIONS @ HERBAL, 12-14 Kingsland Road, London E2. 10-2am. 2.50 b4 10, 5 after. www.therapysessions.co.uk / 07976 687 684. Spor, Gein, Vicious Circle, Squire, Nausea, MC's Lowkey & Stapleton. Room 2: Ayah & Friends.

FRIDAY 20TH JULY

HOSPITALITY @ HERBAL, 10 / 14 Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London E2 8DA. 9 – 3. £5 before 10.30, £8 after. www.hospitalrecords.com. London Elektricity, Nicky Blackmarket, CLS, High Contrast (old skool set), & Riley.

DARKLIGHT V DEF:INITION @ VOLKZ, 3 The Colonnade, Madeira Drive, Brighton. BN2 1PS. 10pm – 5am. £5 B4 22.30 (£8 after). info@clubdefinition.co.uk / www.clubdefinition.co.uk. Noisia, Chase & Status, Vicious Circle, DLM, Inter, Unison, Trouble. MC's: ID, Mekar, DVS, Kombo.

SATURDAY 21ST JULY

DEF:INITION @ CLOCKWORK, 96 – 98 Pentonville Road, Islington, London. N1 9JB. 9pm – 4am. £8 B4 Midnight (£10 after). info@clubdefinition.co.uk / www.clockworkbar.co.uk. Zinc, Sabre, Prophecy, Inter, Mr Joseph, Turmoil & Leks. MC's: Joker D, Skeez, Deefa, V Double E.

AUGUST LISTINGS

FRIDAY 3RD AUGUST

EPIDEMIK @ MINISTRY OF SOUND, 1-3 Gaunst Street, Elephant & Castle, London. 10-6. £10. 07966 491554. www.epidemik.com. Ratpack, Altern-8, SI2, Billy Bunter, Slipmatt, Devius-D, Food Junky, Jacknife, Mc Jay-J, Charlie-B, Five Alive & Many More.

INTERFACE @ RED, Friargate, Derby. 10-4. £8 / £10. www.myspace.com/interfacederby. Nicky Blackmarket, Bassline Smith, Drumsound, MC's Biggie & Youngman.

FIZZY FRIDAY @ OH BAR!, 111 - 113, Camden Highstreet, NW1, London. 8pm - 4am. Free entry before 9 - £3 before 11 - more after. 07841 465186 / www.fizzyliquid.com - www.myspace.com/fizzyliquid. LINE UP: Brockie, Uncle Dugs, Mr Joseph, Caspar, Dimensions and Izzy. MC's: Evil B, Deefa, V double E, Cliche, Rinsa & Keeno.

PHAT 08 TASTER TOUR SERIES @ THE CIVIC, 194 Manchester Street, Christchurch. 10pm Onwards. $30 + b/f. www.phatclub.co.nz. Black Sun Empire, Concord Dawn, The Upbeats, Wicked Draw, Organikismness, Dose, Urban Notion.

SATURDAY 4TH AUGUST

ESSENCE OF CHI 3RD BIRTHDAY @ HIDDEN, 100 Tinworth St, Vauxhall, London. 9pm-6am. £12 adv. 07817 706484. tickets@essenceofchi.co.uk / www.ticketweb.co.uk. Calibre, Total Science, Bailey, A.I, Lynx, Subterra, Healing Crew, T1, Fats, SP:MC, LowQui, Five Alive, K Eye, Master X. Jungle Arena: Nicky BM, Kane, Nookie, A Sides, Concrete, Emtek, Outlaw & Wize, Haze & Psylence, Hades, Justyce, Shockin B, Joker D, Bassline MC. Breaks Arena: Atomic Hooligan, Control Z, Ed 209, Quest, Lockup, Whirley, Ken Mac, Reload, Miss Trouble, Incyte.

PHAT 08 TASTER TOUR SERIES @ REFUEL, 640 Cumberland Street, Dunedin City. 10pm Onwards. $30 + b/f. www.phatclub.co.nz. Black Sun Empire, Concord Dawn, The Upbeats, Wicked Draw, Organikismness, Drop, Vanadis, Sonic Smith live, Shortkutz & Definnit Breaks DJs.

SUNDAY 5TH AUGUST

PHAT 08 TASTER TOUR SERIES @ SUBCULTURE, 13-14 Church Street, Queenstown. 10pm Onwards. $30 + b/f. www.phatclub.co.nz. Black Sun Empire, Concord Dawn, The Upbeats, Downtown Brown.

THURSDAY 9TH AUGUST

PHAT 08 TASTER TOUR SERIES @ PHAT CLUB, 137 Bridge Street, Nelson. 10pm Onwards. $30 + b/f. www.phatclub.co.nz. Black Sun Empire, Concord Dawn, The Upbeats, Organikismness.

FRIDAY 10TH AUGUST

STIMULUS @ SMACK, 5-9 Tavistock Street, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PJ. 10.30-3. £6. 01926 422223. www.myspace.com/stimulusdnb. Bryan Gee, Logistics, Benny & Aries, Dan Marshall, Caution, MC Algar, MC Accapello.

PHAT 08 TASTER TOUR SERIES @ SANDWICHES, 8 Kent Terrace, Wellington. 10pm Onwards. $30 + b/f. www.phatclub.co.nz. Black Sun Empire, Concord Dawn, The Upbeats, Trei & Snax.

SATURDAY 11TH AUGUST

BEST OF BRITISH 'THE RESSURECTION' @ CANVAS, Goods Way, Kings Cross, London, N1. 10pm – 6am. Adv £10 / £15 MOTD. Credit/Debit card 08707 544 445. info: 07881 790305 / 07976 267532 / myspace.com/thebestofbritish. Arena 1: G Dub b2b Hazard, Fabio b2b Grooverider, Krust b2b Lemon D, Nicky BM b2b Ray Keith, Total Science b2b Bryan G, Brockie b2b Benny Page, Randall b2b Darren Jay, R Type b2b D 4orm. MC's: IC3, Eksman, Shabba, Navigator, Fearless, Ragga Twins, Fats, Moose, Rizla, Flyte & Fleximus. Arena 2: Ratpack, Phantasy, Devious D, Nookie, Squirrel, Funky Flirt, Food Junky. MC's: Moose, Jay Jay, Ice. Arena 3: Brisk, Dougal, Seduction, Kevin Energy, Slipmat, Billy Bunter, Vibes & Livelee, Spinback. MC's: Storm, Whizzkid, Casper, Spenno, Charlie B, Suicide. Arena 4: Mala, Youngsta, Benga, D1, Alex Deadman, Rogue State, Hoodsey. MC's: Task, Deadman & Marksman.

THURSDAY 16TH AUGUST

DSM PRESENTS @ BOHEMIA, 1a Imperial Square, Cheltenham, Glos, GL50 1PT. 9-3. £3. stumasta@go-deep.co.uk & www.go-deep.co.uk. Fu & GDS with Mantmast. Residents; Donovan Smith, Subsurface, Subverse, Ben-E & Stumasta.

FRIDAY 17TH AUGUST

HOSPITALITY @ HERBAL, 10 / 14 Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London E2 8DA. 9–3. £5 b4 10.30, £8 after. www.hospitalrecords.com. London Elektricity, Muffler, Kid Hops, Zac Vibes & Riley.

SATURDAY 18TH AUGUST

DEF:INITION @ CLOCKWORK, 96 – 98 Pentonville Road, Islington, London. N1 9JB. 9pm–4am. Free entry. info@clubdefinition.co.uk / www.clockworkbar.co.uk. Sparfunk, Profile, Inter, Ash-a-tak, Sigma, Emtek, Alite. MC's: Rhymes, Master X, Illmatika, DMC.

KUNNINMINDZ ALLNIGHTERS @ RHYTHM FACTORY, 16-18 Whitechapel Road, Whitechapel, E1, 1ew. 9:30pm-6am. £7 B4 12, £10 After. www.kunninmindz.com. Nicky Blackmarket, Serial Killaz, Nicol & Majistrate, K Dee, Dj K, Grimey & Sharper, Mr Fijjitt, Dj Misfit. Old Skool: Dj Recriminate, Dj D-Vice, Lj High, Dj Subflow, Dj Legzy, Dj Spinnah, Dj Caspar, Mr Joseph. Mc's: Ragga Twins, Evil B, Maveric, Alley-Kat, Trust Me, Reds, Ma., Makkie, Nrg, Deefa

TUESDAY 21ST AUGUST

SOCIALISM @ INIGO, 642 Wandworth Rd, London, SW8 3JW. 8pm until 2.30am. £4 before 11, £6 after (Ladies free b4 10pm). Info: www.inigobar.com. contact: 07766 748 670. Paradox, Insight, Martyn, DJ Trax, Kombinate, Dymond, DJ Sway, MC CD, Bennie D, Mastermind, MC Dominata.

FRIDAY 24TH AUGUST

WHIPLASH @ SHAKESPEARIENCE, Waterside, Stratford-Upon-Avon. 9.30pm - 2.30am. £6 B4 11, £7 After. Info: myspace.com/whiplashuk / 07881702905. Dj Brockie, Caution, D-Vice, Inspire, Hena-C, Dj Rt B2b Razor (Old Skool Jungle Set), Mc Algar, Mc Doddzy.

PRIMAL
Turnmills, London

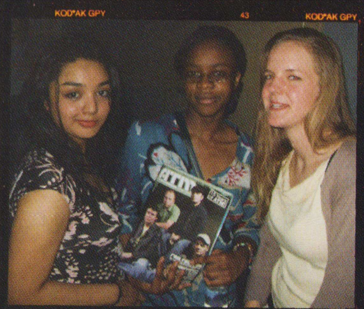
Problems on the Tube made me frustratingly late for Primal's Easter Sunday special and as I arrive Teebee is already in full flow in the main room. The club is not quite full, but those ravers who are present are packed tightly on to the dance floors – giving the impression that it is much more crowded. Teebee represents with a deep dark sound; fast two step breaks with squelchy round bass give way to horror movie atmospherics on the drops. The MC mercifully chooses to make his contributions sparse, letting the music speak for itself.

The main room at Turnmills is a perfect setting for Teebee's darkside efforts: red and blue lights drown the room in colour, green lasers flash off disco balls through the smoke, and the rig sounds full and heavy wherever you find yourself on the dance floor thanks to massive speakers suspended from the ceiling. The atmospherics are so all encompassing that I can barely see any other ravers and happily lose myself in a bass and drum induced dancing frenzy.

The crowd is a more mature and stylish selection of D&B ravers, but no less up for the party. Friendly ravers aren't afraid to come up and say hello, touch fists and put arms around strangers on the dancefloor – the vibe is more like a house rave than a jungle bashment.

Teebee gives way to Zinc, whose jump-up junglist style goes down a treat as he deftly double drops crowd pleasers like Jenna G's 'In Love' and Dizzee Rascal's 'Sirens'. Usually I like to wander around clubs, but tonight I'm solidly stuck to the dancefloor. Zinc turns into Klute at some point and it gets darker and techier again, but the mood of the crowd becomes only more euphoric – no moody hoods up ravers here (except me, and I was only pretending). Later on, Spirit brings a refreshing dubby mood to the proceedings and causes some serious skanking to break out with a set proves the highlight of the evening.

Primal is the only drum and bass night at Turnmills, and they have turned that exclusively to their advantage effectively, by putting on a great night at a great venue. The DJ selection and music policy shows real thought and knowledge of good D&B, and the friendly and enthusiastic crowd simply prove the icing on the cake. Heavy.



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who shot ya?

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